

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 8th October, 1896.

Government School Teachers: increases of salary to—
Boating fatalities on Swan River: prevention of—
Bastardy Laws Act Amendment Bill: second reading—
Western Australian Land Company's Concession: purchase of—
Waterworks Bill: first reading—
Australasian Federation Enabling Bill: first reading—
Judges' Pensions Bill: third reading—
Colonial Passengers Bill: second reading; committee—
Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill: committee—
Agricultural Lands Purchase Bill: third reading rescinded; third reading—
Loan Bill (£3,500,000) 1896: second reading—
Adjournment.

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

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TEACHERS—
INCREASES OF SALARY TO.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE asked the Minister for Mines: Whether any provision has been made by the Government to raise the salaries of the Government school teachers throughout the colony.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied: The matter is under the consideration of the department.

BOATING FATALITIES ON SWAN RIVER
—PREVENTION OF.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: By leave of the House I beg to withdraw the resolution I moved yesterday.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I now beg to move—"That, in the opinion of this House, some means should be taken for the protection of the lives of persons boating on the Swan River." In view of what happened recently I feel sure that this motion will commend itself to hon. members. The means I would suggest of giving effect to it are, in the first place, to increase the number of the river police by two or three, and by providing a boat of considerable size and having on board a sufficient quantity of life-saving appli-

ances. The police could then cruise about in the more dangerous parts of the river and render any assistance in their power. Then I would propose that lifebuoys should be placed at different points between Perth and Crawley. I may say here that if lifebuoys had been placed along the bank of the river, as I suggest, in all probability the last two accidents would not have terminated fatally. In one case a man swam out with a rein and was unsuccessful, but if he had had a lifebuoy the chances are that a life would have been saved. In the last accident, which took place within 150 yards of the shore, although there were a number of people looking on, no one could do anything to render assistance. If lifebuoys had been available probably all four lives would have been saved. The cost of buoys is very little—about 10s. each. Therefore a small expenditure of £5 would be all that would be required in this direction. I would suggest that some of the buoys should have lines attached to them, so that those on board could render assistance. I should also like to see all boats let out for hire licensed, and compelled to carry life-saving appliances. At present we are all aware that boats are allowed to go out overcrowded. Parties go out in calm weather, and when they get into the Narrows the strong sea breezes come up, and then the accidents happen. No doubt in the late accident the party went out in the calm, and that, when they were returning, the breeze sprang up, and the boat overturned. It may be said that, if people are foolish enough to go out without having any experience in the management of boats, why should we trouble. I may point out that we make regulations for the protection of life on land. We have regulations about driving round street corners, for preventing persons getting into trains in motion, and for preventing the pointing of firearms. If we take such steps to prevent loss of life on land, why should we not adopt means for saving life on water? I may say, also, that a police boat is necessary on the river to protect property and to prevent foul language being used. There are at present three river police, but, as they are obliged to do duty at night, they are not able to work in the day as well. I feel sure this House will agree to the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) : I have much pleasure in supporting this motion, for it deals with a matter of considerable importance. Whatever precautions we may take, there must always be this difficulty staring us in the face. When any person is upset in the water at a moment's notice, he will probably be drowned if he cannot swim, and, that being so, it is not easy to devise a means of preventing loss of life. We can, however, minimise the danger by providing that boats shall not be allowed to go out unless they are in charge of persons who understand them, and unless they are properly equipped with life-saving apparatus. Even then the difficulty will not be surmounted, because it will generally be found that, although life-buoys may be on board they will be tied to the mast, and will not be available for use when required. Still, whatever time is spent in discussing this motion will not be wasted.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) : This is one of the occasions on which I shall exercise my right of saying a few words on the question before the House. There are very few who have had more experience on the river than myself. In my early days I was constantly upon it, and I may safely say that neither I nor those with whom I was associated ever had an accident. At the same time, we always took the precaution of having the necessary appliances for saving life on board should an accident occur. Those who have read the accounts of the accidents which have lately occurred must have been struck with the fact that the loss of life took place owing to want of proper life-saving-appliances being at hand. These accidents happened between here and Crawley. Hon. members know that I am backwards and forwards every day, and I think I may safely say that, had there been appliances on the road, the lives of all the unfortunate individuals concerned would have been saved. Take the case which happened off Polly Point. In this instance a man swam out with a rein and did all he could. If he had had a buoy with about sixty yards of line attached, the drowned man would have been saved. Then as regards the accident which took place last Sunday. I passed by the spot the next morning, when the bodies were recovered. They

were obtained within ten yards of the shallow channel. There were people on the road at the time the accident occurred, and if life-saving appliances had been available, most of the lives, if not all of them, would have been saved. I do hope that something will be done during this coming summer, when the fatalities are most likely to occur, to place some life-saving apparatus between Mill Lane and Crawley Point. If my memory serves me aright, the late Mr. Henty, when urging a similar motion upon this House, suggested that a stage should be made off the Canning Humps, where four lives at that time were lost. On that occasion, if there had been anything of the kind near at hand all these lives would have been saved. Then there is a matter which deserves the immediate attention of the Licensing Board. They should, I think, license all boats plying for hire, and limit the number of passengers to be carried by each. Living at Crawley as I do, I cannot help seeing the number of boats upon the river on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and which are either overcrowded or in charge of persons totally ignorant of the management of them. Really, the number of fatalities on the Swan River is becoming a serious matter. I do not think that in any part of Australia there is so large a fatality list as we have here, and it is therefore a matter of urgency that we should do something to prevent this lamentable loss of life.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON : I rise with pleasure to support this motion. In the course of a long experience of the river I am only too well aware of the number of lamentable accidents which have occurred. From Crawley to Mill Point seems to be more dangerous than the lower part of the river, and I entirely agree that steps should be taken at the earliest possible moment to provide life-saving appliances. I think also that we should compel those who let boats out for hire to place life-saving apparatus on board. It might also be said that a person who understands the management of a boat should always go out with it. That would be rather a difficult matter in a case like that of Mr. Butson's, of Fremantle, who had some thirty boats for hire. I entirely go with the Hon. Mr. Stone in thinking that a police boat

should be kept moving about in the dangerous parts of the river so as to be available if any accident occurs. I shall support the motion.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: Coming down in the train the other day I heard a person make a very good suggestion, which I will give to the House. This individual considered that it would be a good thing if the makers of boats were compelled to put a strip along the bottom, so that if a capsized occurred the occupants would have something to hold to. I give this suggestion to the House for what it is worth.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I have much pleasure in supporting this motion, and I entirely concur with the very able remarks which you, sir, have been pleased to make in regard to it. After the expression of opinion on the part of hon. members, if the Government do not take immediate steps to carry out the motion they will show a lamentable want of care for the lives of the people. During last year many accidents occurred, and as our population is so rapidly increasing, we must expect to hear of more occurrences in the future. Many lives have been lost up to the present, and the number will be considerably increased as time goes on, and I hope the Government will take immediate steps to minimise the dangers to those who use the river as a means of recreation.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I think the hon. gentleman who introduced this motion should receive our hearty thanks. These constantly recurring accidents are causing anxiety to all of us, and they must lead us to the conclusion that something should be done to prevent them if possible. We find that boats are overcrowded, a practice that should at once be stopped, and we should also make it compulsory that there should be on board sufficient life-saving apparatus for the use of passengers in case of accident. Population is pouring into the colony at a great rate, and we may take it that boating will be indulged in more in the future than it has been in the past. Therefore, whatever we can do to reduce the dangers in connection with it, it should be our duty to give effect to it.

Question put and passed.

Motion agreed to.

BASTARDY LAWS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: I hope the House will receive this Bill in the same spirit in which I bring it forward. Under the present Act a magistrate has power to make an order against the putative father of a child for payment of 5s. a week. Hon. members will agree, I think, that the amount is not sufficient in all cases. It may, perhaps, be enough in Perth and Fremantle, but I do not think it is sufficient on the goldfields. In some of the other colonies the amount payable is left to the discretion of the magistrate, but I have adopted 12s. 6d. as being the sum which I consider a reasonable one. A magistrate need not always give the full amount, but he can fix such sum up to 12s. 6d., as he thinks fair and reasonable. The reason why an Act was passed originally to compel putative fathers to contribute towards the maintenance of their illegitimate children was that it was found that girls would get into trouble, and finding that they could not support the child, would do away with it. Unless we in this colony make the contribution a reasonable one there is no doubt we shall hear of many cases of infanticide owing to the high cost of living. I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. D. MCKAY: If this Bill is passed, it will tend to the increase of immorality, and, therefore, I shall oppose it.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I think this Bill is a very good one. Five shillings per week is not sufficient to support a woman and her child; I think 12s. 6d. little enough.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill was then considered in committee, agreed to without amendment, reported, and report adopted.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) then left the chair for an hour.

On resuming,

PROPOSED PURCHASE OF GREAT
SOUTHERN RAILWAY AND LANDS.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) reported the receipt of the following Message from the Legislative Assembly:—

“Message No. 41.

“Mr. President,—

“The Legislative Assembly having this day passed the following resolution:—
“That this House approves of the purchase by the Government of the whole of the interests of the Western Australian Land Company of Western Australia, including the railway from Beverley to Albany, all rolling stock, unsold land, unpaid instalments in arrear and in prospect on lands sold on deferred payments, and all other property of every description in Western Australia, and rights and interests under the contract between the Government and Anthony Hordern, dated 25th day of October, 1884, for the sum of ‘One million one hundred thousand pounds,’ presents the same to the Legislative Council for its concurrence.

“JAS. G. LEE STEERE,

“Speaker.

“Legislative Assembly Chamber,
“Perth, 7th October, 1896.”

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I move that this Message be taken into consideration in committee this evening.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I see it is reported in a newspaper that the Government have already wired to London stating that this matter has been fixed up. I cannot, therefore, see the use of our considering it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I do not know what appears in a newspaper, but it is very improbable that the Government have done anything of the kind.

Question put and passed.

Motion agreed to.

WATERWORKS BILL.

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

AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION
ENABLING BILL.

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

JUDGES' PENSIONS BILL.

THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

COLONIAL PASSENGERS BILL.

THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: I was induced to propose the adjournment of the debate, because at the time I was confusing this Bill with another which bears almost the same title. Since then I have considered the matter, and have come to the conclusion that it is a good Bill, and I hope it will pass.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I desire to thank the Hon. Mr. Haynes for moving the second reading of this Bill, for I find that the Attorney General did introduce it into the Legislative Assembly, and that I ought to have taken charge of it here. However, the hon. member probably explained it better than I could have done, and I tender my thanks to him.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 4 agreed to.

Clause 5—Copies of extracts to be furnished:

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: I move that the word “fourpence” be struck out, and “twopence” inserted. The usual price for copying is twopence per folio, and not fourpence.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: As probably no extract required will be of any great length, I do not think it is worth sending the Bill back to the Legislative Assembly for the purpose of making this small amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

The remaining clauses were agreed to, the Bill reported, and the report adopted.

MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

New clause:

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I beg to move that the following new clause be added to the Bill:—"Every person who fails to comply with Sections 2, 3, and 4 shall be guilty of an offence against this Act."

Question put and passed.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported, and report adopted.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE BILL.

THIRD READING RESCINDED.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I think, sir, that last night you said you would give a ruling as to the position which this Bill is in. It has been read a third time before, and notice has been given to read it again a third time to-day.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): I have considered this matter, and looked into the past proceedings of it, and I am of opinion that, to place ourselves in order, we must rescind the motion which was previously passed, by which the Bill was read a third time, and then read it a third time again. Where mistakes have occurred—and there is no doubt that a mistake has been made in regard to this Bill—power is given by which they can be rectified. On the last occasion, before reading the Bill a third time, we should have sent it to the Assembly with the amendments we proposed. I would suggest to the hon. the Minister, therefore, that in the first place he should move to rescind our previous resolution.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): In accordance with your ruling, I move, "That the resolution adopted by the Council on 2nd September last agreeing to the third reading of the Agricultural Lands Purchase Bill be rescinded."

Question put and passed.

Resolution rescinded.

THIRD READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I move as an amendment that all the words after "that" be struck out, and the words "the Bill be read a third time this day three months" inserted in lieu thereof. We have just had an intimation that the Government have purchased the Great Southern Railway and all the benefits under the contract entered into between the Government and Anthony Hordern, which include a large area, amounting to nearly 3,000,000 acres, of agricultural land. This land, I take it, will now be thrown open, and therefore there is no necessity for this Bill. When this Bill was proposed it was said that it was necessary, because there were no agricultural lands available, but that cannot be so now. If the Government are going to purchase land and clear and drain it, besides adding 10 per cent. to the cost, it will so increase the price that the Government will not be able to resell it when they have so much land available along the Great Southern Railway, at a lower price. I take it that the Government would not have agreed to purchase the railway and lands of the Western Australian Land Company unless they considered the lands would be of some use. I know the hon. the Minister will say that I have taken every step possible to throw this Bill out. I admit that up to a certain point I have. Yesterday I did not care anything about the amendments; all I was concerned in was in maintaining the dignity of the House. Now, however, the position is changed, and no necessity exists for the Bill. Therefore, I hope those hon. members who voted for it on the ground that there was no agricultural land available will now vote with me in laying the Bill aside.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I must say the Hon. Mr. Stone is a very determined opponent. If he cannot gain his point in one way he will try to gain it in another. He has just brought forward a most ingenious argument, and I congratulate him upon it, but at the same time it will not hold water. The Bill before us is purely permissive. The object of it is

to enable the Government, if opportunity offers, to acquire any first-class agricultural land that may be adjacent to our railways. The Bill is so hedged round that there can be no jobbery, and it will only be put into force if land is offered in suitable positions. The Hon. Mr. Stone says that, because the Government contemplate gaining possession of the land along the Great Southern Railway, there is no necessity for this Bill, but we must remember that the lands between Albany and Beverley are not the only lands in the colony. I will not waste the time of the House, however, but will simply ask hon. members to vote for the Bill.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: It seems to me to be a most extraordinary thing that we should have to fight this Bill over again. As the hon. the Minister says, the land along the Great Southern Railway is not the only land in the colony. Having recently travelled through the Eastern districts, I must say that a Bill of this sort is necessary. There are large blocks of first-class agricultural land lying idle, and if we do not take some steps to utilise them we shall soon have either to alter our land laws so as to make improvements compulsory or we shall have to impose a land tax. If the Government do not properly spend the money which will be at their command, I am sure there are plenty of hon. members who will call them to account. I ask that this Bill should have a fair trial.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I hope hon. members will not give this Bill a fair trial, but will support the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Stone. The argument of that hon. gentleman is about as strong as it possibly can be, and the hon. the Minister has made no attempt to answer it. It is time to bring in a Bill of this kind when it is necessary, and not before. There are thousands of acres of land on the Great Southern Railway which will now be available, and, therefore, there is no use in having this Bill. Since this Bill was introduced circumstances have considerably altered. The Government having now obtained possession of nearly 3,000,000 acres of land, I fail to see why we should give power to purchase more.

THE HON. E. McLARTY: I have heard the argument used before that, because the Government have purchased the

Great Southern Railway, this Bill is not necessary, but to my mind that has nothing whatever to do with it. This Bill is just as necessary now as ever it was. There are plenty of Crown lands available, but the object of this Bill is to endeavour to cut up the large holdings and get them settled. Representing the Southern district as I do, I should not be doing my duty if I allowed it to go forth uncontradicted that, because this land along the Great Southern Railway had been purchased, therefore all the settlement must take place in that direction. I know several large estates the owners of which cannot sell them, not because they are not asking a fair price, but because the estates are too large for people to purchase. If the Government buy them I feel sure there will be no difficulty in cutting them up and selling them without the slightest trouble.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: And do a good turn for their friends.

THE HON. E. McLARTY: Do a good turn for the colony. Although the Bill is passed, the Government will not be bound to spend the whole of the £200,000. Moreover, it is so safeguarded and hedged round in every possible way that no risk is run in passing it.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I think hon. gentlemen are right in saying that the land along the Great Southern Railway is not the only land in the colony, for we know that there are vast areas of agricultural lands on the Avon and along the Southern and Midland Railways. I cannot but think, however, from the fact of the Government having just purchased 2½ million acres of land from the Western Australian Land Company, that it is carrying out the principle of this Bill to a very large extent, for it will burst up one of the largest estates in the colony. We know that the company had a right to select within 40 miles of the railway, and we take it that the best land was availed of. This land has been repurchased at what I may say is a very large price. We know that the railway and rolling-stock is valued at £600,000, and therefore £500,000 of the £1,100,000 it is proposed to pay goes for the land. This is a large amount to pay for the purchase of agricultural land in one year. Why, then, should the Government ask for permission to spend £200,000 more?

Why not let us see how settlement goes on on the lands which have just been purchased, and then afterwards see whether this Bill is necessary? I had no idea when I advocated this Bill that we were going to have a Loan Bill for £3,500,000 brought in, a Waterworks Bill besides, and then purchase this railway and its lands, or I should not have supported it. Seeing that we are about to incur these large liabilities, it behoves us, I think, to look at matters with an eye to economy. Can the Government get rid of the lands they have purchased from the Great Southern Railway within the next 10 years? It may be unfortunate that the Government have been compelled to spend all the money for the purchase of agricultural lands in one district, but, having done so, I am not prepared to assent to more being expended in other districts at present.

Question, that the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the question, put.

The House divided with the following result:—

Ayes	11
Noes	7
	—
Majority for ...	4

AYES.

The Hon. R. G. Burges
The Hon. C. E. Dempster
The Hon. J. W. Hackett
The Hon. R. S. Haynes
The Hon. D. McKay
The Hon. E. McLarty
The Hon. C. A. Piesse
The Hon. W. Spencer
The Hon. J. H. Taylor
The Hon. E. H. Wittenoom
The Hon. D. K. Congdon
(Teller).

NOES.

The Hon. W. Alexander
The Hon. F. T. Crowder
The Hon. A. B. Kidson
The Hon. S. H. Parker
The Hon. J. E. Richardson
The Hon. H. J. Saunders
The Hon. F. M. Stone
(Teller).

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

PROPOSED PURCHASE OF GREAT SOUTHERN RAILWAY AND LANDS.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Consideration in committee of Legislative Assembly's Message No. 41 (*vide p. 952 ante*).

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of this Message, which has been sent to us by the Legislative Assembly for our concurrence. Hon. members are, no doubt, aware that steps have been taken to carry out a

generally expressed desire that the Government should purchase this railway; and during the last twelve months negotiations have been taking place with this end in view. A few months ago the company offered the line for a certain sum, but this the Government would not give. Further negotiations took place, with the result that the Government, subject to the confirmation of Parliament, offered £1,100,000, which the company agreed to accept. The Legislative Assembly have had the matter before them, and have confirmed the action of the Government; and it now remains for this House to say whether, in their opinion, the purchase is in the best interests of the colony. It has been considered desirable to take over the railway for three or four reasons. In accordance with the general policy of the country, it is considered wise to do away with private railways as far as possible, and have one national system, worked upon one basis and upon one scale of charges. Another reason is that this was a land grant railway, and for constructing it the company got about 3,000,000 acres of land. In purchasing the company's interests, the Government get back nearly the whole of this land, and will consequently be able to work it in the same way that other lands of the colony are worked. While the company has held the land they have not worked it in a satisfactory manner; and I am told that those who have purchased selections from the company are very discontented. Again, we know that there have been some very serious disputes between the company and the Government as to the right of the company, under its concession, to select townsite lots; and, by the purchase, these disputes will be settled, and all further trouble saved. It is needless for me to go into the particulars of the line, because they are well known. It is in good working order, and it has been thoroughly inspected by the Government inspectors, who declare that it is in excellent condition.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Sleepers as well?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Yes, the amount of traffic of late years has been very good, and has been sufficient even at the price the Government propose to give to make

the railway pay. Seeing that the valuation of the railway is only £600,000, it looks as if the Government are giving £500,000 for the land, but I may point out that the line was never constructed for £600,000. It cost £914,000, and £30,000 has been spent on property in Albany, which in itself is a good asset. The receipts during the last nine months have been £55,000, so that, taking the next three months on the same basis, the revenue for the year will be about £75,000. The expenditure has been 51 per cent., or about £37,000. This leaves about £35,000 to the good, or taking the interest on £1,100,000 at 3 per cent., the profit will pay the interest on the purchase price and leave about £5,000 to the good at the present rate of traffic. The purchase of this railway will help to do away with some of the troubles at Fremantle. If three or four ships come into Fremantle together, some of them can now be sent to Albany to unload. In the past this could not be done, otherwise it would have been open for the company to say that the colony could not do without it, and the price of the line would have been raised. The amount of rolling stock is as follows:—45 wagons, 10 engines of the best type, and 10 bogie saloons. In addition to this, there are to arrive 100 new wagons and 4 bogie saloons, which will all come within the purchase. There is another asset, although, perhaps, there is not much value in it. The company has sold about 250,000 acres of land, some of it on deferred payment, and the Government will receive all further payments unless they relax them.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: 80,000 acres have been sold on deferred payment; 167,000 acres have been sold right out.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): Whatever it is the Government take it over; in fact, altogether, the Government will stand in the position of the company. I do not know that I can add any more. Hon. members are so well aware of the facts that is hardly wise to labour them. I can only now commend the motion to the favourable consideration of hon. members, and hope they will affirm it this evening, so that a cable may be sent to London. I may add that there is no truth in the statement that the Government have already sent a cable to London on the

subject. I move that the following message be sent to the Legislative Assembly:—“That this House approves of the purchase by the Government of the whole of the interests of the Western Australian Land Company in Western Australia, including the railway from Beverley to Albany, all rolling stock, unsold lands, unpaid instalments in arrear and in prospect on lands sold on deferred payments, and all other property of every description in Western Australia, and rights and interests under the contract between the Government and Anthony Horden, dated 25th day of October, 1884, for the sum of One million one hundred thousand pounds.”

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I do not think the hon. gentleman mentioned how the money is to be paid. Is it to be paid by debentures or in cash?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): The company is willing to take 3 per cent. inscribed stock.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution before the House, and in doing so I may express my pleasure in being able to congratulate the Government on bringing this matter to a termination. In taking over the interests of the company they are binding together a large portion of the population of the colony which at the present time consider themselves isolated from their fellow-colonists. They have been unable to take advantage of our liberal land laws or other Acts which had been passed for the benefit of the agricultural population. The purchase of this railway is a matter I have had seriously at heart for many years. I was returned at the head of the poll for the province I represent, and the chief plank of my platform was the purchase of this railway and its lands, so that I think that I may fairly say that those whom I represent are in favour of the present action of the Government. Certain residents of Albany thought fit to oppose me on this question, but their arguments were very narrow ones, and I believe that those who used them now admit their error. Had there not been a strong opposition on the part of the people I refer to, I feel sure this purchase would have been made

long ago. It has been said, too, that I got into Parliament to support the purchase of the Great Southern Railway, and that from then up to the present I have kept my mouth shut on the subject. I have been working, however, from the start, but it has been a delicate matter to speak about publicly. Moreover, if I had been constantly bringing the subject before this House, it would have gone forth to the bondholders that the Legislature was anxious to purchase, and consequently they would have asked a heavy price. All along I was assured that the Government were earnestly endeavouring to bring about the purchase, but that they were not prepared to allow their hands to be forced. I believe that if an attempt had been made to come to terms before this a much larger price would have had to be paid. I have travelled over the lands through which the railway passes, and a deal of them can be turned to good account, and before many months have passed I feel sure we shall see a large population settled on the ground which the Government are now resuming. The policy of the Land Company has been a very foolish one, and the Government have somewhat contributed to it by not insisting on one of the clauses of the agreement, whereby the company was bound to place so many immigrants on the land. All through, the company has gone on the principle of getting as much as they could for the land, whereas the Government will sell it cheaply or even give it away to secure settlement, and thus make the railway pay by carrying the produce of the soil. So far as the working of the railway is concerned, I wish to say that I consider the Great Southern a model railway, one which will compare more than favourably with any other service I have travelled over. Under the able management of Mr. Broadfoot it has been worked in such a manner as to be the envy of the managements of the Australian colonies. It has been shown to be possible to work a line for 5d. per mile less than any other. We all know what Mr. Short, the able traffic manager, and the rest of the officials have done, and I feel sure that we shall be looking after our own interests by retaining the services of those who have proved themselves more than competent in the working of this railway. I

only wish to say that the Government are to be congratulated on bringing the purchase to a close, and the inhabitants are also to be congratulated on having regained that which the Government made a mistake in parting with. I do not believe in railways being built on the principle of the Great Southern, and it is a good thing that we are able now to get this line into our own hands. I am sure it will return a big percentage on the outlay, for it is no bogus concern. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion before the House.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE : It is with mixed feelings that I speak to this motion—feelings of joy that the matter is now settled, and of regret that it has been so long in being settled. I am one of those who, for 12 years, has known what it is to go through a period of penal servitude of the worst class which living on this line, and being bound down so that we could not help ourselves, has been. I do not wish to weary hon. members by making any lengthy remarks on this subject, because the matter has been so long before the public that everyone must know how we have been trying in vain to settle the land under the conditions imposed by the company. We have seen business place after business place go down; and old settlers, who once had thousands of sheep, either leaving the district for other parts to make a fresh start, or becoming shepherds themselves. These old settlers, who held only small holdings for the purpose of sheep farming, suffered most severely, because the company took it for granted that, having made their selections in the early days, they had got the best land available, and the company thereupon selected all round them, and deprived them of their runs. Fortunately, the Government get this land back, and I may tell hon. members that some choice spots will now be available for selection. There are some beautiful pools on the Williams which are never dry, and the land round them is only waiting for people to select. I should like to lay stress upon this point, because a feeling has got abroad that all the eyes have been picked out of the land. That is not so. In seven years' working the company has only secured five new settlers in the district to which I refer, and these do not hold more than 5,000

acres of land. The people living along the railway have asked us to release them from their obligations to the company, and to place them on a similar footing to the settlers in more fortunate parts. Hon. members would scarcely credit the intense anxiety which has been felt by these settlers as to whether they would get free or not. Even when the matter was before the shareholders of the company in England the settlers could not get on with their work on account of their anxiety to know what their fate would be. It is of no use, however, to labour the question, for I think the only point we have to consider is whether the railway is worth what is asked for it. There need be no two opinions on that point. At present the greater portion of the company's debentures bear 6 per cent. interest, others bear 8 per cent., and some 10. Therefore, what would involve the company in a loss would give a profit to the Government, with debentures bearing interest at 3 per cent. In addition to this the Government could obtain more rolling stock, and open up the lands, and thus make still larger profits. The present receipts of the company are more than sufficient, with the line in the hands of the Government, to pay interest on the purchase money and working expenses. I do not take the value of the lands into consideration at all, for I think the railway itself is honestly worth the £1,100,000. I regret the argument which was used against this railway when we were considering the Agricultural Lands Purchase Bill, for the people of the district through which it passes do not consider that they possess the only agricultural land in the colony. Besides the railway and the lands, there is the magnificent jetty at Albany at which ships of any size can land their cargo. Reference has been made to the employés of the company. I hope that provision will be made to take over as many of them as possible; they have proved themselves reliable and trustworthy, and I should be sorry to see any of them thrown out of employment through this purchase.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: I should not like to be quite silent on an important subject like this. We have looked forward with some anxiety as to what course the Government would take

in regard to this railway, for we have long felt that the policy of the land company was not a good one in the interests of the particular portion of the colony concerned. In helping to bring this matter to a head as he has done, the Hon. Mr. Piesse deserves a great deal of credit, and I now congratulate him on the successful termination of his labours. I hope the purchase will be completed and will prove a source of profit to the colony directly as well as indirectly.

Question put and passed.

Resolution agreed to, reported, and the report adopted.

LOAN BILL (£3,500,000), 1896.

SECOND READING.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I feel bound to say that when this Bill was introduced I was very much concerned to find that this colony was embarking on a borrowing policy to so large an extent. It appeared to me (and I do not know that it does not at the present time) that we were quite ignoring the lessons we should have learnt from the financial positions of the neighbouring colonies when we follow in their footsteps and take no note of warning from their experience. Eventually, I fear our position will be very similar to what theirs is. I take it the present Government are in a large measure responsible for initiating a system of expending loan moneys. I am not prepared to say that the public at large would not in the course of time have demanded an expenditure to a considerable extent, but I think that the Government are responsible for having educated the public taste to such an extent that they are not satisfied with borrowing one or two millions, but in one session alone they are prepared to accept the responsibility of six millions. We have a large and increasing revenue, far beyond our needs, and I cannot but think that some of the works which are contained in the schedule to this Bill should be constructed out of our surplus. In these circumstances it seems to me that we cannot properly consider this Bill until we have the Estimates of expenditure before us, so that we may see how much money the Government propose to

expend out of the general revenue on public works. Having these Estimates before us, we shall be able to judge of the works the Government propose to construct, and the amount of money they will involve. It is said that all the works in the schedule are necessary. I admit that the larger part of them appear to be so, and I regret extremely that we are obliged to borrow such immense sums of money to construct them. As regards some, however, I cannot think they are absolutely necessary. The hon. gentleman who introduced this Bill stated, I believe, that our present population amounted to 125,000 people. In his calculations he estimated that, in the course of a few years, the population would amount to 200,000, and he told us that, when we had borrowed all the money authorised this session, our indebtedness would be about £11,500,000, which would make the indebtedness per head about £52. I do not think it is a safe policy to borrow on the chance of an increased population. The money will be borrowed for a certainty, but there is no certainty as regards the increase of population. We all hope that my hon. friend's anticipations will turn out to be correct, but surely the safe course is to borrow only such moneys as the population at the time the Loan Bill is passed can safely be counted upon to pay. In adopting the present course we are discounting the future to too great an extent. If in some years to come our population numbers 200,000, we shall then possess a debt of £52 per head, and we shall have precluded ourselves from further borrowing until there is a further increase. The national debt of Great Britain amounts to £700,000,000, and if Great Britain were to owe money in the same proportion to her population as we shall, she would owe £3,100,000,000, more than four times her debt at the present time. Calculating our population at 130,000, a number which has not yet been reached, we shall owe, when all this money has been raised, over £88 per head, a far larger sum than is owed by any of the neighbouring colonies. It may be, as we all hope it will, that by the time this money is expended our population will have increased, but surely the safe and statesmanlike course would be to wait for the population and not borrow

money in anticipation. We may be sure that, having embarked on this borrowing policy, we shall go on like the neighbouring colonies until our credit is no longer of any avail to us in the London market. The present Government having initiated and carried out the policy of public works, a policy by which nearly every constituency is awarded a large sum for expenditure, I fear no Government which follows will be strong enough to resist the clamors for expenditure until our credit is exhausted. Then will come the day of reckoning, and I trust the present Government will never have cause to regret what I say is a policy of lavish expenditure, which they have educated the people of Western Australia up to. It seems to me that the Government might fairly well have gone along by saying, as regards some of the works which we consider necessary, that as to some of them they would be constructed out of our surplus revenue, and as to others, that it is safer to wait for the further development which will take place, and the increased population which we all think will reach our shores. I know that a policy of lavish expenditure brings prosperity to members of Parliament and to the public generally for a time, and is one which I think has never been successfully opposed. If a Government bring forward such a policy, and show that the revenue is increasing, and is able to bear the charge of interest necessitated by the increased loan, then we shall always find that not only Parliament, but the public at large, will be prepared to accept the views of the Ministry and avail themselves of all the benefits which accrue by the increase of public expenditure. I have no hope, therefore, that we shall be able to retard the policy which has been initiated—a policy of lavish expenditure, and nothing more than a sop to all the constituencies—until our credit is damned in the London market. I have no hope of opposing any of these items. I might point out some which I consider are absolutely necessary. I do not think it necessary that we should build railways to every mining shaft. I do not think that when we have a railway to Kalgoorlie it is necessary to carry it on to Kanowna. The hon. the Minister said that if we agreed to this railway it would enable mining machinery to be carried, and that the mines could

then be developed. I understand that Kanowna is only 12 or 13 miles from Kalgoorlie. Surely if the mines are worth anything they can be developed with a railway within 12 miles of them.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): There are a lot of mines beyond which would benefit.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: Probably so. Then I doubt whether the policy of the Government in starting the railway to Menzies as is proposed from Kalgoorlie is not very detrimental to the harbour works at Fremantle. It might be said that the Government should look to all parts of the colony and should not favour Fremantle or any other port at the expense of another, and that, on the other hand, if Esperance is the natural port, it should be opened up without regard to the effect of it. We must bear in mind, however, that we are incurring an immense expenditure of public funds at Fremantle in order to attract the shipping there. If, therefore, we have any idea of making Fremantle the port of the colony and any idea that the trade to the gold-fields should go through Perth and Fremantle—any idea that the mail steamers should be induced to call there—then I cannot but help thinking that it is unwise to take any steps which may affect that port. If we do not intend these things, then there is no justification for constructing the harbour works at a cost of £800,000. But if our view is to concentrate the trade at Fremantle, then I think all other public works should be subservient to that idea; I take it that we are within a reasonable distance of having a railway from Esperance to Dundas. If the Dundas fields are anything like as valuable as they are reported to be, we shall be unable to resist the construction of a line connecting them with their natural port. That work has already been suggested to the Government, and, even if the colony refuses to undertake it, I feel certain that members of Parliament generally will consider it unreasonable to refuse a concession to a private company to build the line. Having reached Dundas, will it not afterwards, and very shortly afterwards, be connected with Coolgardie, and, if so, will not the result be that the trade of the gold-fields will pass, not through Fremantle, but through Esperance? Will

not the result of this be that the £800,000 which we are expending on constructing this magnificent harbour be of little avail to the colony? Had the Government proposed to construct the extension to Menzies, not from Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie, but in such a direction that it would enable us to hold the trade of the fields, then these magnificent harbour works would be justified. As at present intended, by constructing the railway from Kalgoorlie, the line must be carried on to Esperance, and thus the trade in the future will be passed through the hands of the merchants and storekeepers of the other colonies, instead of through the hands of those to whom it justly belongs.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: That might be under free trade.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: Whether we have free trade or not it will not affect the profits of the merchants or traders, and it will mean that the colony at large will be taxed more for the benefit of the neighbouring colonies than for our own people. There is another large item on this schedule which the Minister may be able to give us some explanation about when we go into committee; £200,000 is put down under the head of development of goldfields and mineral resources. As I said, it is almost impossible to offer any objection to this borrowing policy, still I feel sure hon. members will demand a full explanation of every item before the Bill is passed. We have had no explanation of this item of £200,000. My hon. friend the Minister says it will be spent on water supplies and other works; but surely we are not going to pass so large an item on such a bare statement as this. Again we have the item "Water supplies for towns," and the hon. the Minister admits that he is not in a position even to tell us the names of the towns which are to have the benefit of it. Then there is the "Fremantle dock and slip." I cannot say that I require any further information about that. The amount for "Fremantle harbour works" we all know about. "Dredges and barges"—I think we should have some explanation of these. I understand the colony is already in possession of a large number of dredges and barges, which are being used at Fremantle. I imagine that in the course of a few years the

harbour works will be completed, and that there will be no further use for the dredges and barges at Fremantle. I should have thought that then they might be used for other parts of the colony. Then there is the item "Sewerage for Perth and Fremantle," and I will only remark that this amount is only the first instalment. Before we pass it, however, I think we should know what the estimate of the work is. As regards the Menzies railway, I do not suppose I can ask for any further information. Then we come to a large item—"Additions and improvements to open railways"—and I think we should have the fullest information before we consent to it. I do not know how much of the first item is to be applied to the purchase of lands, or how much to works, but I think we should know, and also how the works are to be performed. Then we have £140,000 put down for rolling stock. We have already voted immense sums for rolling stock, and I am anxious to know how it is that every time we build railways we provide rolling stock for them, and yet the department is now asking for this large sum. I do not think we should be doing our duty unless we demanded the fullest explanation of all these items before attempting to pass them. I notice that the departmental expenditure comes to about 5 per cent. on each work, but we can hardly imagine that it will cost about £60,000 simply to order this rolling stock.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): Some of it has to be put together in the colony. In many cases the ironwork only is imported and the woodwork is constructed here.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: Altogether, the departmental expenditure is put down at £178,000, a sum one would almost think sufficient to keep an immense staff doing nothing but what is called departmental work. I have nothing more to say on this Bill, but I again ask that we shall be furnished with the fullest explanation of every item before we are asked to pass it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): As no hon. member evidently intends to speak on the second reading of this Bill, I may refer shortly to the speech which has just been delivered by the Hon. Mr. Parker.

In the first place, I must congratulate him on having sounded a note of warning, and advised us not to go too fast or to be too lavish. No matter how flourishing our circumstances may be, it is always a good thing to have cautious men among us who will not hold up the brightest side of the picture. The remarks made by the hon. member must be useful to us, even if they do nothing else than cause us to reflect and be careful before consenting to a large expenditure of public funds. For my part, I fully endorse all he has said, and I may add that if any hon. member can show that we can do without any of the works provided for in the schedule he will earn the thanks of the Government, because we have been trying for months past to see what we could leave out, and have failed. The hon. member says that some of the works should be constructed out of our excess revenue. If, however, he had looked at the Estimates of Expenditure which I have laid on the table, he would have seen that, although the revenue is anticipated to be very large, yet after everything is provided for there will be only £14,000 or £15,000 left. Thus it will be seen that there will be no money available with which to undertake any of these works. Then the hon. member said that we should not incur further borrowing until we obtained more population. If, however, we wait until then, all the industries we are endeavouring to foster will, in the meantime, be languishing. We are, as I have already said, somewhat in the position of a firm just starting in business, and when a little assistance, at a critical time, may do an immense amount of good. The Government are of opinion that the expenditure of these moneys will do such a vast amount of good that they have decided to embark upon further borrowing. Then the hon. member drew a dark picture of what would result from starting the railway to Menzies from Kalgoorlie. If his premises be correct, I agree that his remarks may be justified; but I would ask him whether he thinks that a Government which would build a railway from Esperance would hesitate to build a small branch line as well if it were required, so that we could retain command of the traffic. One of the principal reasons which have induced the Govern-

ment to start from Kalgoorlie is economy. There is a saving of £50,000 to start with.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: Why not start from Coolgardie?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): If we had started from Coolgardie we should have missed Kalgoorlie. With regard to the information asked for, I shall be only too glad to afford the fullest explanation in committee. The reason I did not go too much into detail the other night was that the whole of the information and figures have been circulated in the newspapers, and I felt that to repeat it would have been inflicting stale news upon hon. members. As regards the item "Development of mineral resources," it is almost impossible to say how the money will be expended. The Government desire, however, to have funds available to meet such emergencies as have arisen in the past, when large sums of money had to be spent on their own authority without the approval of Parliament. With regard to the question of water supply for towns, a Bill has been introduced, and read a first time, under which this money will be lent. As the towns which take advantage of it will have to pay interest there can be no objection to this item. As regards "Dredges and barges," the reason for this item is that two or three of them are coming from England. There is such a lot of work to be done along our coasts, and which cannot wait until the Fremantle harbour works are finished. At Cossack some work is urgently required to be done, and it would not be fair to put it off until the Fremantle harbour works are completed in three years' time. As to "Sewerage for Perth and Fremantle," I may say the total estimate is £300,000, and, if the cities grow, probably more will be required. The additions to open railways include the duplication of the line between Perth and Midland Junction. This will cost £50,000. The purchase of land will involve £170,000. Then there are electric staff system and signals £40,000, workshops at Midland Junction £80,000, and water supply along the lines (although probably the water scheme which has been passed will do away with the necessity for this) £130,000, and other items. As the Hon. Mr. Parker has

said, the departmental expenditure is calculated at five per cent. In many cases the money is required for clerical work. As regards the expenditure in connection with the rolling stock, we must bear in mind that a good deal has to be done after it arrives. In many cases the iron-work only is imported, and the woodwork is constructed here. Of the £1,100,000 for rolling stock £400,000 worth has already been ordered and is on the way out, and a further £400,000 worth has just been indented for. The balance of the money the Government desire to keep in hand to meet the requirements for the next two or three years. I do not think any further information is necessary now, but if any hon. gentleman desires to have an explanation on any item I shall be happy to give it when the time arrives.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: This Bill is a matter of so much importance that I think it my duty to express an opinion upon it. I fully concur with the able manner in which the Hon. Mr. Parker laid the matter before us, and I cannot help thinking that we are extremely rash in entering so largely into a policy of borrowing when we might be more moderate. We are rather endeavouring to be in advance of the times than in going with them, and I am afraid the result will be that we shall find ourselves in the position of the other colonies. Should this be so, it will be more serious for us, because we have not the advantages that they have. We have not the same extent of rich land. Everything depends upon the prosperity of our gold-fields. If they do not go ahead it means ruin to Western Australia, for we shall be saddled with a debt which we can never shake off. In these circumstances, I think it would be wiser if we were more moderate in our borrowing policy. Many of the items I think we might do without for some time. The water supply for towns is a matter, for instance, which we should not borrow money for, as I think the towns should do a little for themselves in this respect.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): They will pay the interest.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I think they should be made to do more for themselves. There is scarcely a town in the country which cannot

conserve water enough to last the residents throughout the year, but everyone in these days goes to the Government for everything. People not only ask for what is necessary to meet their requirements at the present time, but they want what they will require in the future as well. The Fremantle harbour works seem to be an everlasting drain on the resources of the colony. I am not going to say that the sewerage works for Perth and Fremantle are not necessary, but I think that the works should be carried out by the towns themselves. As regards the Menzies railway, I think it might have been deferred until our goldfields are more firmly established than they are. I hope, in committee, the hon. the Minister will be able to show us that most of the items in the schedule to this Bill will be reproductive, although if I had my own way, I should not approve of borrowing to so great an extent.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): According to the rules of the House, a right of reply is given to the hon. member who moves the second reading of a Bill. Some time elapsed after the Hon. Mr. Parker concluded his speech, and no other hon. member apparently being desirous of speaking, the hon. the Minister for Mines rose to reply. Now it appears that hon. members wish to re-open the debate. In these circumstances I shall exercise the discretion which is given me, and allow the hon. the Minister for Mines a further right of reply. I may add that it is quite contrary to Parliamentary practice to carry on a debate in this way.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: I represent a district in the Northern part of the colony, and, looking at the schedule to this Bill, I cannot help thinking that the Government have entirely abandoned the North. Those hon. members who are always against the Government—the Hon. Mr. Burges and the Hon. Mr. Kidson, for instance—seem to get the most, and, it follows, therefore, that if we desire to get anything for our constituencies we must oppose the Government. Out of this loan no less than £685,000 is for Fremantle, and yet that town is loudest in its complaints against the Government. Most of the money provided for Fremantle is to be thrown

away into the sea. The £200,000 for development of goldfields and mineral resources is all to go to Coolgardie, and the Murchison and Northern fields are to be entirely neglected. The item "Water supply for towns" I am in favour of, but the amount is a miserly one. "Fremantle dock and slip"—here is Fremantle again. "Harbour works"—Fremantle again. "Dredges and barges"—it is said these are for Cossack, but they will never get out of Fremantle. By the time they are ready to leave Fremantle they will be fit for nothing other than to be sold as old iron. "Deep sewerage"—another item for Fremantle. The whole Bill is for Fremantle and Coolgardie. No doubt the object of the Government in framing it in this way was to prevent the unemployed at Fremantle from striking, and to satisfy the capacious maws of the people of Coolgardie. Probably they are afraid that Coolgardie will separate if the people there are not satisfied, and the next thing we shall hear is that Fremantle will want separation. As something is required for the North, I shall propose to head a deputation in favour of separation. Before I vote for this Bill I must have a pledge from the Government that something will be done for the North.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I think I may satisfy the anxiety of the hon. gentleman that there is no intention on the part of the people of Fremantle to separate so long as they receive fair treatment at the hands of the Government. The hon. member thinks his constituency has not received fair treatment. I sympathise with him, and any co-operation I can give him in obtaining a fair share of the good things that are going, I shall be willing to extend. Fremantle, however, is not a small fishing village, such as the hon. member represents. It is the chief port of the colony. Although attention has been called to the fact that a large amount under this Bill is for Fremantle, it must be borne in mind that the greater part of it is for the continuation of the harbour works, which are not for the benefit of Fremantle alone, but are being constructed in the interests of the whole colony. I think hon. members will do well to take heed of the note of warning which has fallen from the Hon. Mr. Parker. I think a large

number of the works in the schedule might well be constructed out of revenue.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): What works, and where is the revenue?

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: The hon. member will be able to answer that better than I can. We have a revenue of £2,000,000, and it seems to me that many of these works might be constructed out of it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): All the money is allotted.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: Perhaps some of the items provided for by the Estimates might be left out and some of these inserted. I am sorry to have to say that, in my view, so long as we have the present Engineer-in-Chief we shall have these tremendous loans asked for. Since he has been here we have had a continual series of loans for public works, but I think the time has arrived when we should pause a little and not go so fast. I know the Premier does not agree with this, and when any objection is taken to his proposals, he says "Let us leave the timid and laggard ones behind." I do not agree with him, for I think this borrowing policy will eventually result in disaster to the colony. We are depending almost entirely on the goldfields, and if there happens to be a slump our position will be most serious. As regards this Bill, the information given by the hon. the Minister is very meagre, and I do not think we ought to vote for it without further explanation. We should exercise the greatest caution and not indulge in what the Hon. Mr. Parker has very rightly termed lavish expenditure. If, however, the Bill is passed, I can only hope it will result in lasting good to the colony.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 9:45 o'clock, adjourned until Tuesday, 13th October, 1896, at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 8th October, 1896.

Jury Act Amendment Bill: Message from the Governor — Question: Perth-Fremantle Road — Question: Stores Department at Fremantle, and reported removal—Motion: Standing Orders Suspended for expediting business—Waterworks Bill: third reading—Annual Estimates: Complaint of delay re Excess Bill; Railways and Works Estimates further considered — Cue-Nannine Railway Bill: second reading—Perth Racecourse Railway Bill: second reading—Kalgoorlie-Kanowna Railway Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

JURY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) presented a Message from his Excellency the Governor, and the same was read, recommending an appropriation to be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of an Act to amend the Jury Act, 1871; a Bill with that object having been introduced on the previous day.

QUESTION—PERTH-FREMANTLE ROAD.

MR. WOOD (for Mr. Solomon), in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when there was a probability of the Perth-Fremantle Road being opened for public use.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied that, at the present rate of progress, it would probably be about six months before the entire road was completed and open for traffic.

QUESTION—STORES DEPARTMENT AT FREMANTLE, AND REPORTED REMOVAL.

MR. WOOD (for Mr. Higham), in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works whether it was the intention of the Government to remove the Colonial Stores Department from Fremantle.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied that there was no intention to do so at present.