

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 5th December, 1907.

	PAGE
Questions: Agricultural Surveys, Railway Duplication, etc.	1283
Agricultural Bank Advances, Central Province	1285
Papers ordered: Denmark Railway Purchase	1285
Motions: Goldfields Water Supply to be Self-Supporting, resumed	1286
Denmark Railway and Land Purchase, to approve	1314
Bills: Agricultural Bank Amendment, 3s.	1285
Land and Income Tax Assessment, 2s. resumed, adjourned	1309

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL SURVEYS, RAILWAY DUPLICATION, ETC.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What has been the cost to the State of survey before selection of all lands for the past two years? 2, Is the cost of survey before selection of "agricultural lands" paid from ordinary revenue? If not to what vote it is charged? 3, What is the cost of ringing, cutting down, and otherwise improving unselected lands during the past two years, and to what account is the amount debited? 4, What amount has been spent from ordinary revenue in connection with the "duplication" of the Eastern Railway during the past two years? 5, How much has been spent from ordinary revenue during the past two years in connection with the reclamation of the river foreshore in the City of Perth?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, £9,400. 2, The cost of survey before selection is paid from ordinary revenue. 3, £8,744. This expenditure is charged to the Development of Agriculture. 4, Nil. 5, The Public Works Department has not spent anything from revenue during the past two financial years on the reclamation of the Perth Foreshore.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK ADVANCES, CENTRAL PROVINCE.

Hon. J. M. DREW asked the Colonial Secretary: What is the total amount of money lent by the Agricultural Bank since its establishment to applicants within the Central Province?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Amount approved, £31,025. 2, Amount actually advanced, £18,004.

PAPERS—DENMARK RAILWAY PURCHASE.

Hon. J. M. DREW moved—

That all papers and correspondence in connection with the purchase of the Denmark Railway be laid on the table.

The fullest information with regard to proposals such as the proposed purchase of the Denmark Railway should be afforded to members of this House, but the only information we now had was that to be derived from a map, and an agreement which the Government proposed to sign if the motion be carried. True, one could read in the newspapers snatches of the reports of the various officers in connection with this purchase, but one wished to read the reports in full. When he was head of the Agricultural Department he visited this district and was so pleased with the soil that he had had an immediate analysis made of it. That analysis proved very disappointing. If this motion were carried the Minister might secure from the Department Mr. Chaplin's analysis of the soil. It was to be hoped that the motion for the purchase of the railway would not be pushed through until members had ample opportunity of perusing the papers that would be laid on the table should this motion be carried.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD seconded the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY offered no objection to the motion. The papers would be laid on the table immediately. Mr. Chaplin's report was attached.

Question passed.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK AMENDMENT.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

MOTION—GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY.

To be Self-Supporting.

Debate resumed from the 20th November, on Mr. Patrick's motion that the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme be made self-supporting.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): This long-delayed motion has at last reached a stage when it is possible to get in a few more remarks, and I shall not detain the House long. There is perhaps more interesting business before us. The motion is one which the House can very well agree to; it is more or less academic; it is advisable that a great public undertaking should pay its way; but very early in the debate, almost immediately after Mr. Patrick in his very careful and moderate speech got into the swing of his remarks, the tenor of the debate was diverted, and it really became a question as to whether this Goldfields Water Scheme should be helped by tacking on to it the Perth and Fremantle system of water supply. I think almost every member in this House who has addressed himself to the question took that view, and I greatly regret that two of those members who were most strenuous in their remarks, Mr. Wright and Mr. Pennefather, after having delivered their views did not consider the matter of farther importance. It was a subject for a speech, and there the matter ended. To my mind this is a question that involves very grave considerations, and I hope I shall be allowed to take the same latitude, that is, to take the second branch of the subject as well as the first, to admit in the terms of the motion, "that the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme should provide sufficient revenue to meet cost of administration, interest, and sinking fund," but to deny the second part of the argument, which is suppressed in the motion, namely, that this relief ought to be obtained by connecting the two services, the metropolitan and the goldfields water supplies. We are all agreed on the one point, that there are two pressing needs in connection with this question. The one is that we should obtain a better and a larger supply of water for the metropolitan district, and

the second is that we should make the goldfields water scheme pay. With regard to the first, that connected with the metropolitan water supply, I need not labour the matter. It has already been dealt with by Mr. Patrick and others. The water supply to the metropolis is a disgrace and the water supply to Fremantle is a still greater disgrace. [*Hon. R. Laurie: Hear, hear.*] Both supplies, especially when the bore water predominates, are unfit for human supply. I say that most deliberately and unhesitatingly. Cheap as they are, the sooner they are got rid of the better for the country, and the better for the towns that are supposed to derive the benefit of that convenience. That being so, it becomes a question of where a better supply is to be obtained; and really the whole argument before the House is whether we can obtain that better supply from any one of the schemes that have been recommended for the consideration of the House. As the House is aware, a Commission has lately been sitting, and it has made a most careful and exhaustive report which does the Commission credit and for which the Commission are to be thanked. Whilst speaking of that Commission I will go out of my way to deprecate insinuations that have been cast about that there has been some occult force behind the movers in favour of a supply of water from the Canning in the present circumstances, and that within and without the Ministry means have been adopted of a compulsory character to induce the decision in a certain direction. I hate making insinuations and not giving the direct point of the attack. We all know very well what is the amount of influence within the Ministry. It is said that Mr. Frank Wilson, who I believe is Colonial Treasurer of the State, has a certain small interest in the site of the dam or reservoir that is proposed at the Canning, and it is implied in no uncertain terms that it is so much to his interest that the Canning site should be the one adopted that he is using his power or that of his friends on his behalf in order to get that site chosen.

Hon. J. W. Patrick: I think no one said so during the debate.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: No one said it was Mr. Wilson. I am putting in the name. Some one did refer to this force.

Hon. W. Maley: In this Chamber?

The Colonial Secretary: Yes; certainly.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: Certainly, but it is ridiculous for me to linger over the point.

Hon. W. Maley: I was not present, so I do not remember.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: I may be failing in years, but I have a very good recollection of what was said. Then there is another charge made and that is that something of the nature of a direct instruction was given by the Minister, Mr. Price, in a memo. to the Premier; an absolutely cold, formal, and commonplace memo. directed to the Premier, and pointing out what is obvious to everyone, that if this Commission should report in favour of the Canning scheme it would do much to silence captious critics in the future. These gentlemen of the Commission never saw that memo. I suppose, and if they read it they would not read into it the same meaning that was put in this House. This cold official statement was no more than that. It was open to the whole world. If they were led by the evidence and their investigations to report in favour of the Canning scheme it would be a good thing for the scheme; that is all it amounted to; a very proper minute to make. Instead of striving to over-inducement or to exercising pressure of an indirect and more or less corrupt kind, I understand the Government are at loggerheads with that Commission, and there is a question over the fees to be paid to them. If that is the way the Government seek to coerce the private judgment of public men, then they are very stupid and very new at the game. Let us get rid of this insinuation, there is nothing in it.

Hon. C. A. Piessé: I never knew it was made in that respect.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: It was. Mr. Pennefather kept speaking of the enthusiastic support given to the Canning scheme. He was not the only one who seemed to think there was something corrupt, and to use a strong word, something dirty in the whole transaction. Probably

I myself am one of the most strenuous, I will not say supporters of the Canning scheme, but opponents of the goldfields scheme, and my friend felt himself justified in uttering a strong denunciation against my conduct. I am sorry my friend (Hon. J. W. Wright) has just come in now my remarks are made, but I will not delay the House longer by repeating them.

Hon. G. Randell: You will not repeat them?

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: No; they will be taken down in *Hansard*; and I hope *Hansard* is taking my remarks down fully and carefully on this occasion. The whole question before us is whether it is advisable, whether it is expedient, that these two schemes should practically be amalgamated. The first question that occurs is—and I want to be as short as possible in my remarks—whether the Mundaring reservoir possesses a sufficient supply of water, first for the Eastern goldfields; secondly, for the Eastern districts; thirdly, for a supply along the route, a matter to which I will draw a little attention later on; fourthly, for Perth; fifthly, for the suburbs of Perth; sixthly, for Fremantle; and seventhly, for the suburbs of Fremantle. That is very easy to dispose of. A gentleman whom we all had respect for, who is now in his grave, the great founder of that scheme—the practical founder of it—Mr. O'Connor, estimated after careful watching—it was only an estimate, they had no strict gauging in those days—estimated that the supply to be depended on for a series of years for the Mundaring reservoir was five million gallons per diem. The gauging taken since then will be found in the report, a very excellent digest of which has been supplied to the Press. And the gentleman who signed that report were unanimous; they insisted emphatically that no more can be depended on from that reservoir than 5½ million gallons per diem. That is due to a curious fact which shows the patchiness of our country and the meteorological conditions. While the rainfall is larger in the whole of the Helena valley, the rainfall in the Canning valley is much

more reliable, and much more dependable. There may be a severe drought in the one case in the Helena valley followed by an excessive rainfall for several years, while in the Canning it never rises so high or falls so low.

Hon. W. Maley: Are there statistics given?

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: These are the meteorological reports.

Hon. W. Patrick: We have not the report of this Commission.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: No; an excellent digest has appeared in the newspapers; and the member cannot go very far wrong in following that report. I am assured by the Public Works Department that it is only pressure of time in the Printing Office that has prevented their getting out a sufficient number of copies, and probably the reports will be ready next week; but we could not well ask that the debate be postponed again. The member might suggest, to use a word which is hardly Parliamentary, that I was funkng the discussion, but I am sure the hon. member will not say that, at all events so jocularly, when I have completed my remarks. It may be accepted that through a series of years nothing more can be depended on with the dam at its present height than $5\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons per diem. Members will hardly believe that for the two years 1901 and 1902, and these are official gauges not estimates, the total inflow into the Munderaring reservoir was not quite equal to one-half the evaporation from the reservoir for the same period. It is a startling statement to make. That is a point I will come to in a moment. The point is for these two years, 1902 and 1903, so little water came down the Helena valley that would run into the reservoir that it was not quite equal to half of the evaporation from the reservoir in the same year. With a full draw of $5\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons taken from the reservoir commencing at the end of the winter of 1900, and with every drop of water from the Helena valley conserved, the reservoir would have been dry before the end of the summer of 1903. There is a fact derived from official gaugings. I appeal to members who have not yet spoken and who

have not yet made up their minds to look at the matter in an impartial spirit, and if they do so they can only come to one conclusion. That being so, it is a matter so obvious that I need not dwell on it, that any attempt to farther diminish the supply of that reservoir, more especially when it was connected with the Perth system; should the reservoir run dry with the goldfields, Perth, Fremantle, and Eastern districts all dependent on it solely, because all other supplies would have been discontinued, would be an exceedingly serious position.

Hon. R. F. Skoll: There is the Victoria reservoir.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: The Victoria reservoir is only calculated to supply one million gallons; what is the good of that if we want five times that quantity? The member forgets that it is impossible to pump from the Victoria reservoir to Kalgoorlie.

Hon. R. F. Skoll: To assist the supply.

The PRESIDENT: Members had better not interrupt.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: What I want to point out now is that the official gauging is as I have stated, $5\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons. The dam might be raised and an immense body of water conserved; but we must recollect that the demands are eastwards, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons—we must be prepared for that at least, it would be dangerous to cut it down to that. In Perth alone the average is rapidly rising to four million gallons per day—last summer so great a consumption as $4\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons was known. Added to that we have the sewerage scheme coming on, and it is estimated that will require about 30 per cent. as much water as in the past to deal with it. Not alone has Perth to be supplied but all its suburbs, and Fremantle as well; in fact, we shall have to be prepared to begin with a supply of from six to seven million gallons. Whichever scheme is adopted and completed six or seven millions will be required to supply the metropolitan district. It is obvious it cannot be got out of the Helena reservoir without raising the dam very considerably. Here we come at once to the proposals made in the report; there are six or seven; some are

thrown aside at once. There are two or three eminently feasible and eminently interesting, but a little consideration shows that they must be discarded also. The Commission largely confined themselves to the flow of the Helena and the Canning; the Serpentine was available, and so was the Avon. The Avon is subject of course to incursions of brackish water along its course; it is not a good stream for drinking purposes or for human use, whereas the Serpentine is some distance away, but the Helena and Canning are about equally distant. It is impossible to go any day in July and August to the Mundaring reservoir without being struck by the magnificent stream running over the sill, sometimes a foot deep. The idea suggests itself, why not run a pipe into it and bring the water down. That is one suggestion, not made by the Commission but scouted by them. There are two or three other proposals. There was first of all to build a dam below the Helena and the present Mundaring Weir, but the storage was insufficient for the pumping required to convey it to the metropolitan area. That is disposed of. Then there were two big schemes, one for the Canning, and the other for the Helena River, the proposal being to construct the dams to their full height at once. That proposal was also set aside as being at present too expensive, though the authorities considered it might be undertaken in twenty or thirty years. There was also a suggestion for an earthen dam at Kelmseott; but that suggestion was laid aside. At last the engineers came down to two alternative schemes—one to build a dam to impound the Canning storm waters, the other, to build a dam attached to the present Mundaring weir, to build a dam right up against the weir, which would rise higher than the weir, having foundations sufficient to carry a wall, say, 177 feet high. An idea prevails in the minds of some that it would be quite easy on the other hand to put a coping on the top of the present Mundaring weir, which is 100 feet high, and that thus a large amount of water which now flows over the weir would be impounded. The report states the engineers are convinced that this would be

feasible—everything is feasible to engineers—but that they do not recommend it; and they cite Mr. Palmer's opinion against anything of the kind. That opinion I have recently obtained. It is obvious that unless the weir is absolutely a stable structure, the larger the body of water impounded behind it, the more terrible, if it should burst, would be the calamity to those living in the valleys below, including the people of Midland Junction, Guildford, and Perth. That being so, the board set themselves to consider two modified schemes—the Canning scheme, to begin with a weir which might ultimately be raised to 220 feet, but which was to stop at 125 feet in the first instance; and the Helena scheme, with a weir of 117 feet. And these are really the two suggestions put forward in this report, and the suggestions upon which, I believe, Parliament and the public must ultimately depend. The next point the engineers had to consider was the cost of these two schemes; and their aim, a very rational aim, was to find what storage at either of the sites would give the required outflow for Perth and for the metropolitan area. They found that a weir 125 feet high at the Canning, or a weir 117 feet high at the Helena, would be sufficient. Then they considered the cost. I am sorry that Mr. Sommers is not in his seat. He is one of the most eager supporters of the Mundaring scheme; I think he was the first who mentioned it in this House; and I had intended to warn him that if he proceeds with his advocacy of the Mundaring scheme it will certainly cost him his seat at the next election.

Hon. W. Patrick: Is that a good argument?

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: No. I simply wish to warn the hon. member, in a friendly way; and the same may be said for Mr. Wright.

Hon. J. W. Wright: I do not intend to stand again, so you need not trouble.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: I am sorry for that; but if the hon. member does stand, he will have to change his opinion. Change is not an unknown feature in the deliberations of this House. The cost of

these two schemes, which it is contemplated will provide $7\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons per day or thereabout, including the supply from the existing Victoria reservoir, is fully set out in the report; and I regret Mr. Sommers's absence chiefly because I wished him to explain one or two interjections he made—for instance, that $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions were put down for the Canning scheme, and that practically nothing was put down for the Mundaring scheme. Mundaring was available as a supply, almost for nothing, while the Canning scheme would cost $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions. I ask members to disabuse their minds of that idea. According to the engineers, for the Helena No. 2 scheme the gross estimated expenditure until 1910 is £1,309,000, whereas for the Canning No. 2 scheme it will be £1,277,700—a considerable difference in favour of the Canning. I wish to point out that these are not the important figures; because in both cases a very large block of expenditure, representing all existing works and amounting to £653,000, must be deducted from the total. The engineers have taken the Victoria reservoir, the mains, the reticulation, and all other works as a fixed quantity valued at £653,400; and that sum has to be deducted from the total for either scheme—£1,309,000 or £1,227,700, as the case may be. If the deduction is made we shall find that the cost of the Helena No. 2 scheme will be £655,600, and of the Canning No. 2 scheme £624,300. There is not a very great difference, but the difference is in favour of the Canning scheme. That is the sum which will have to be spent to get an additional supply of water from the Helena, or a new supply from the Canning. The cost of the alternative schemes will be practically the same. I dare say the figures may in some respects be subject to revision. However, that will not affect the material consideration that the expenditure in both cases will be much on a par. In addition to the new work, we shall have in either case the existing works, including all the service reservoirs at present in use, reticulations, mains, management, and so on: all these will represent a constant figure, whatever be the source of supply.

Hon. J. W. Wright: A big area would be locked up by the Canning scheme.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: But we should also obtain a second supply—a most important consideration. Instead of having all our eggs in one basket, we should have them in two. If one supply should fail, we could fall back on the other. My opinion has always been, and this report reiterates it on behalf of the engineers, that all sources of water supply within thirty miles of Perth and Fremantle will yet be required, and required in the experience of many persons now alive. However, the engineers intend only to provide a water supply until the year 1920. In every detail of the expenditure on new work it will be found there is a distinct advantage in favour of the Canning; but I am not arguing for the Canning or the Helena schemes against any other, and I will, with the same whole-heartedness, support any other sensible scheme.

Hon. J. W. Wright: Mr. C. Y. O'Connor's scheme, for three weirs below the present weir at Mundaring, is the best of the lot.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: The two objections to it are that the storage capacity is insufficient, and that pumping would be required to raise the water for the metropolitan supply. The estimated cost of the impounding reservoir is £265,000 for the Canning and £269,000 for the Helena. But the £265,000 for the Canning includes a railway to cost £15,000, which will probably be used by agriculturists in the hills. If we deduct that sum, there is a large difference in favour of the Canning scheme. I mention that by the way, to point out how entirely without foundation is the statement that the Helena supply can be obtained at a comparatively low cost, while the Canning scheme would land us in very heavy expenditure. As one goes through all these items—distributing mains, the annual charges, interest, and sinking fund, revenue required per head of population—every item is found to be in favour of the Canning scheme. I wish to impress on the House that the two schemes will practically cost the same amount, and that what advantage there is is in favour of

the Canning as against the Helena. That being the fact with regard to the cost and the quantity—two most important points—I come to what I consider the most essential question of all. If I can understand the arguments of those who desire to see a connection formed between the Mundaring reservoir and the Perth system, they think such connection would relieve the pressure of the £84,000 deficiency which the accounts of the Goldfields Water Supply show for the past year. The supporters of the scheme in this House can tell me if I am wrong. The notion is that if the water were supplied from Mundaring to the metropolitan area, the resulting profit would both please the metropolitan ratepayers, and would sensibly relieve the pressure on the taxpayers generally and upon the consuming public of the goldfields. I do not wish to be dogmatic about this; but I venture to tell every member in the House, and especially those members who represent the metropolis, that not one penny will under any arrangement be available to reduce the £84,500 deficit, human nature being what it is. Why? There is about this metropolitan scheme a characteristic which, of course, is wanting in the goldfields scheme. I join with Mr. Glowrey, Mr. McKenzie and others in believing that the goldfields scheme is a national work; and I for one am prepared to pay my share of the burden of taxation required for its upkeep, even though the scheme has disappointed us mainly because we made it too large at the outset. I hope it will not be too large for future requirements. It has disappointed us in not meeting all the cost of maintenance, interest, and sinking fund. Last year the deficit was £84,500.

Hon. E. McLarty: It will not ultimately be too large.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: I hope not. The peculiar characteristic differentiating the Goldfields Water Scheme from this proposal to supply the consumers of the metropolitan area, is that this scheme is a municipal one purely and simply. Unless I was firmly convinced that it was the intention of the Government to put the whole cost of this scheme ultimately on the ratepayers of Perth and Fremantle,

I would not be found voting for it. The country at large should not be taxed with this municipal scheme when it is in working order, for the ratepayers should find maintenance, wear and tear charges, interest, and sinking fund. I am persuaded of that. The Government are now constructing sewerage works, and we know well there is a Bill in readiness, or almost in readiness, to convert the water supply and sewerage schemes into a municipal proposition and to hand it over to the people of the metropolitan area. That being so, not one ratepayer in the whole of the metropolitan area will be found in favour of burdening themselves by an extra amount in connection with the Goldfields Water Scheme, which is the true meaning of my friend's contention. They will refuse to pay for the deficiency of £84,000. Let me put it more plainly. A most shocking and preposterous suggestion has been made. We know what the scheme is. There is a magnificent reservoir at Mundaring from which we enjoy some small benefits. We get from it in the metropolitan area one million gallons of water a day and that is all it is calculated to return to us without the supply becoming exhausted. We are prepared to and do pay for all water that comes from the reservoir through Midland Junction and Guildford.

Hon. W. Patrick: How much is paid for it?

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: Fivepence halfpenny per thousand gallons. What are the ratepayers of Perth and Fremantle asked to pay for? To start with there is the dam towards which we pay a small contribution. In addition there is the magnificent display of machinery, probably the finest pumping machine in the world.

Hon. J. W. Wright: No, nothing like it.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: The best for that purpose. Of course there is oil pumping machinery in America which is greater. Anyhow, this machinery is powerful enough to discharge its duty nobly by pumping millions of gallons of water per day 300 miles. That is what we are asked to pay for. Then there is the main of 300 miles and reticulation.

It is actually proposed that we shall pay for the reticulation of the goldfields towns. We pay for the dam, we pay for the machinery, for the steel pipes, for the reticulation and the charges for the service. It is the most monstrous thing ever ventilated before a legislative body. At present the people of the State are prepared to take their part, but now gentlemen come forward and say that the unhappy ratepayers of the metropolis should take the whole of the burden of the deficiency on their shoulders.

Hon. W. T. Loton: Who suggested that?

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: Half a dozen members.

Hon. J. W. Wright: The people on the goldfields only pay for what they use.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: Let the people pay a fair price. The people of the metropolitan area should not be called upon to pay one penny towards that deficiency of £84,000. Take my word for it, the ratepayers of Perth, Fremantle and suburbs will put their foot down and decline to give one farthing towards the interest and sinking fund of that scheme. They bear their proper share as taxpayers and they pay for the million gallons of water they receive from the dam.

Hon. J. W. Wright: The people on the fields do not object to pay for what they use.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: They take great care that no portion of the £84,000 is paid by them. They have done pretty well in the past up there. The metropolitan towns have paid their share, the people are now going to be put to a heavy additional cost owing to the land tax, and on top of it all comes this proposition that they should make good a sum of £84,000 which is the deficiency on the working of the goldfields water scheme. That being so, I fail to see how the gentlemen urging this scheme in a light-hearted way can expect to have their desires given effect to.

Hon. R. F. Sholl: The people of the metropolis get some of the water, for there is a pipe line from Mundaring to Perth.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: That pipe line only carries a million gallons a day.

The cost of that has been loaded on to the shoulders of the ratepayers of Perth and Fremantle. I urge that this matter should be considered in a broad and impartial way, and I urge also that some means should be discovered—and I am with the hon. Mr. Patrick in that—of making the goldfields water scheme pay its way. There are various suggestions besides this impossible one of connecting up the metropolitan area with the Mundaring scheme. In the first place, were I in the Government or had I any considerable influence with them, I should insist that every drop of water that the railways use should be taken from the Mundaring scheme. It is childish absurdity to show an improvement in the railway balance-sheet simply because the department refuse to take the water. Such a position as that can hardly be conceived. The two schemes belong to the same people: they belong to all of us. After all it is only a question of accounts, and means that instead of getting a profit in one direction there will be one in another. What the railways are doing by taking water from outside sources is to make the people pay a heavier tax on the Mundaring scheme than is made up by the increase in the railway returns. I believe that the great tract of fertile country which is unfortunately so deficient of rainfall now, and which runs along the pipe line for miles, is destined to become a valuable asset of our country in the future. I do not say that the water from the scheme should be used for the purpose of irrigating this land, for I know the great cost of that, but it could come in as a supplementary aid. It would help the farmers along that district for many miles alongside of the track to secure them against what they dread more than all, that is the failure of a water supply for their cattle. Also many crops could be helped at the right moment by a judicious application of water, and it is possible that by a wise utilisation of this supply the whole of the country would be converted into a most valuable source of production to Western Australia. I would even do this. I would say if it were possible to make a certain charge for the water, perhaps up to 3s. or 4s.

a thousand gallons, or whatever it might be, then the balance of the available supply should be practically given away, and allowed to be obtained for as small a sum as 6d. per thousand gallons for this purpose. If two million gallons a day are utilised by this means and at that price, for the development of the country lying along the pipe track, it would mean that not only would immense benefit be done to the whole of the district, but that the receipts would amount to a considerable sum.

Hon. W. Patrick: For what purpose would the water be used?

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: I have just gone through that and I would go into it again, but I am afraid I would be trespassing upon the time of the House. The water would be sold for pastoral and agricultural purposes.

Hon. W. Patrick: For irrigation purposes?

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: I have been spending my time and that of the House in going into the matter and I cannot go into it again. All this leads to the one point, and I strongly censure the Government in connection therewith, that they have not taken steps in the direction of properly managing the scheme. It is absurd to allow this huge business practically to manage itself and to run along as best it can. Surely a commissioner should be appointed to take charge. At present this branch of the work is placed on the shoulders of an overburdened Minister, whereas it would take all the time of a very strong and intelligent man to work the undertaking. Until a commissioner is appointed, I do not believe this scheme will be put on a proper basis. I will not detain the House longer, but I think they will agree that the main points I set out to prove have been proved. We want water and we cannot obtain it from the Helena in the present circumstances on sufficiently advantageous terms. There is no doubt that, if we obtained water from there, the cost would be much greater than the ratepayers could afford. If members go into the question of the cost of bringing water to Fremantle from Mundaring, they will be astonished at the amount the ratepayer would have to

pay for the supply, without loading on his shoulders the interest and sinking fund of the original expenditure. We must not endanger the position of the ratepayers, for in connection with the water supply the two great schemes must run apart from one another. The final argument I use is that it would be monstrous to mulct the ratepayers of the metropolitan area in such a sum as £84,000, be it more or less, in order simply to take a duty of the State on their own shoulders, and find the money required to meet a deficiency which it is clearly the obligation of the general taxpayers to provide for.

Hon. W. T. LOTON: I gather from his remarks that the member who has just spoken contends that there is not anything like a sufficient supply of water in the Mundaring reservoir to meet the requirements of the city and suburbs as well as those of the goldfields. Reference has been made by members representing the goldfields, also by other members, to the fact that they note with pleasure the Government now recognise this as a national work. It is absurd to take up such an attitude, for this scheme has never been regarded as other than a national work. Whenever there has been any shortage in the upkeep, or in the working expenses, interest, or sinking fund, the public purse has always been liable for the amount; hence the scheme has always been regarded as a national work, and so it will always be regarded. It has always been recognised by those who looked ahead that if the residents of the goldfields did not use the water in sufficient quantity, the general revenue of the State would be required to make up any deficiency. There has never been any suggestion of repudiating this liability. The question to my mind is whether we cannot do something with the surplus water at present lying idle in the reservoir or annually running to waste, so as to reduce the loss incurred every year. Last year the loss on working was over £80,000, and probably this year it will amount to a similar if not a larger sum. So far as can be seen, there is no immediate prospect of the goldfields residents

consuming a greater quantity than has sufficed up to the present. This great work was in the first instance undertaken in the interests and for the benefit of the people of the Eastern Goldfields; and it was recognised that they could not be compelled to use the water unless it suited their purpose to do so. They will take just so much of the water as it suits them to take, and no more. If the price suits them they will use the water; but if there is a local supply available at a lower price, they will use that as far as it will go, and no one can reasonably complain at their action. Having this immense reservoir and a more than sufficient supply of water, there is no reason why a considerable quantity of that water should not be used to supply Perth and the metropolitan area generally. The lowest year's rainfall since 1900 was in 1902, when the record for the year was only 27 inches, the weir at Mundaring being at that time not quite complete.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Mr. Palmer does not say so.

Hon. W. T. LOTON: What does Mr. Palmer say? Many of us have been in this State longer than he. The hon. member will find that the average rainfall in the immediate vicinity of Perth for the last 30 years has been about 30 inches; in the hill district around Mundaring it has possibly been in excess of that. This being the case, and the reservoir having overflowed during each of the past four years, and having regard to the farther fact, apparently overlooked by some members, that we require for Perth a reserve supply for only seven months of the year, the rains ending about October and next year's fall commencing about May, there is no need to fear a shortage. [*Hon. J. W. Hackett*: The board took all those facts into account.] But they are facts that cannot be got over. The Mundaring reservoir was full for the first time in 1904, and the overflow commenced in July of that year; in 1905 it commenced on the 13th June, in 1906 on the 26th July, and in the present year on the 22nd June. And each year the overflow continued for many days—I do not say continuously. In 1904 the overflow continued till the 11th November,

in 1905 till the 18th November, in 1906 till the 2nd November, and this year till the 15th November. And what was the overflow? In 1904, 7,100 million gallons—nearly twice the capacity of the reservoir; in 1905 it was four times the capacity of the dam, 19,400 million gallons; in 1906, about 6,920 million gallons; and this year 21,250 million gallons, over four times the total capacity of the reservoir.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: I explained that the overflow water could be conserved, but to do so would require the raising of the wall.

Hon. W. T. LOTON: But there is a sufficient supply without doing that. At the end of October every year since the reservoir was first filled, there has remained 4,600 million gallons in the dam. Therefore I maintain that seeing we require, as I have said, a reserve supply for only seven months in the year, there is a sufficient supply in the dam to meet the requirements until the succeeding rains commence to fill the dam again. If there were any doubt as to the recurrence of the rainfall, it might be a different matter; but the rainfall is as certain as can be. Every year we can depend on a fall of 30 to 40 inches; in some years it may possibly be even more. With regard to the consumption, taking last year's figures we find that the average daily consumption on the goldfields was 1,676,600 gallons; in the metropolitan area, outside the city (Midland Junction service) it was 209,833; and in Perth, 2,374,000 gallons. Hence, the total daily consumption for the goldfields and Perth and suburbs during the summer months may be put down at 4,000,000 gallons; and since the dam has a daily output capacity of 8,000,000, we have there a sufficient supply for two years, even after allowing for loss by evaporation. Here we have a magnificent supply of water, capable I should say roughly of providing a constant supply to the goldfields of three million gallons per day and to Perth of five million gallons per day the year round; because it must be remembered that this supply of 8,000,000 gallons per day would be required only for seven months in the year. That would

use up in the seven months 1,680 million gallons, thus leaving in the dam 2,920 million gallons, minus allowance for evaporation, when the next rains again began to fill the dam.

Hon. G. Bellingham: Those figures provide for a two-years drought.

Hon. W. T. LOTON: In addition to this supply, capable of a daily output of 8,000,000 gallons, we have the Victoria reservoir (Canning) with a capacity of nearly a million gallons per day. As a matter of fact, Perth has been supplied with twice that quantity in a year from this source, because during the winter months the supply is replenished. The point is, what can be done to utilise this unused water, and assist to reduce the loss in interest and sinking fund occurring every year? It seems to me that unless the water is used on the goldfields by means of pumping, the next thing is to use it by bringing it to Perth by gravitation, the cheapest way possible, and this would not involve any increased charge to residents on the Eastern Goldfields. It would be a national charge, and whatever the extra cost, it would still be a national charge. Neither would it be a burden on the municipalities in the metropolitan district, except in the matter of laying pipes from Mundaring to the reservoir in Perth. Supposing 30-inch pipes were used, the cost would be approximately £140,000, and interest on that sum at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. would be about £6,000 per annum. If this water were brought to Perth by gravitation, the necessity for pumping from underground supplies would be dispensed with; and though I make no claim as an engineer, I believe that the expense of bringing water from Mundaring to the distributing reservoir in 2ft. 6in. pipes would not cost more for pipes than £140,000, or an annual charge practically for interest of £6,000. That sum would be saved in the cost of pumping now incurred. The cost of pumping water into the reservoir last year is given at £5,000. If we lay a steel pipe from Mundaring to the reservoir on the hill and pay interest on cost at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and 1 per cent. sinking fund we will save the cost of pumping, because there will be no

pumping. What is now paid in pumping will pay the interest on the cost of the pipes; and there will be the advantage that, although it may be advisable to build another dam at Canning or elsewhere, we will have an additional supply for Perth; because there is no doubt there must be a big excess of water that cannot and will not be used on the goldfields for years to come. I am prepared to say there is nothing to make this scheme pay unless a very much larger quantity of water is used in connection with the goldfields. Of course the price paid there will make up the expenditure. The amount that will be paid by the municipality of Perth to cover interest and sinking fund on the pipes should not exceed fourpence or fivepence a thousand gallons, and that will not amount to much. The water is at the weir to be supplied if it is availed of; and supposing that Perth takes its supply from the weir, there will be nothing unreasonable in Perth paying interest and sinking fund on the cost of the dam, namely £250,000; because if Perth had to build another dam, necessarily it would have to pay interest and sinking fund on that; so Perth would pay interest and sinking fund on the cost of the dam, practically about £11,000 a year. If Perth uses two million gallons a day, this at threepence a thousand gallons will give £9,000. That makes a total of £20,000 which might be saved to the Goldfields Water Scheme by the use of the water from the Mundaring weir in Perth and suburbs instead of allowing it to run to waste. But if Perth uses five million gallons a day, then there will be an extra £13,000, so there will be between £20,000 and £30,000 saved by using this water instead of allowing it to run to waste as at present. That is the way I look at it. It is a matter that needs full and careful consideration. I do not believe in going to work on the report—I have not seen it yet—in constructing a new dam at a cost of three quarters of a million to supply five million gallons a day, when we have water at Mundaring and running away four times over almost every year, enough to give an ample supply for the goldfields of three million gallons a day and for

Perth of five million gallons a day for seven months of the year, while for the remaining five months of the year the reservoir is always filled up again as the water is taken out. I have very much pleasure in supporting the motion because I think every effort should be made to endeavour to make this Goldfields Water Scheme pay. It cannot be made to pay at present by the quantity of water used on the goldfields; but if we could supplement the use of the water as I have suggested, instead of losing £80,000 a year, it would be reduced to £50,000 and every taxpayer would be benefited.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) : Thanks are due to Mr. Patrick for the way in which he has brought this matter forward. For years we have been told that the water scheme has been paying, but to put it in other words the main question has been obscured as to whether that scheme has been paying. I can say that every member is in sympathy with the goldfields scheme. We are not in any way hostile to it, but we are bound to look upon it as business men. We want the maximum result at a minimum of cost. Now if Mr. Patrick has done nothing else he has brought this fact before the country plainly and emphatically that the scheme is not paying. Mr. Loton has taken the wind out of my sails. He has suggested a thing I have been dinning into the Minister's ears time after time: "Why not tap the goldfields scheme for the Perth supply?" Mr. Loton demonstrated beyond dispute that notwithstanding the demand for the water on the fields increased twofold, there would still be an ample supply for the goldfields and Perth for many years to come. It is possible the idea may be thrown out, that the reservoir on the hills is 14 feet or 15 feet above the Mundaring Reservoir. Then if that is so we should get an engineer to utilise the pressure and turn it into our mains here to supplement the Perth supply. I believe the report of the engineer is that they have estimated the cost of the whole of the new schemes, and it seems to me that is too obscure. The main question is whether we can get a

supply from the Mundaring Reservoir to supply Perth for some time. I think Mr. Loton has amply demonstrated that it can be done. I endorse every word the hon. member said with regard to this. It is idle for the goldfields or for any person to deny that the Goldfields Water Scheme is anything but a national scheme. I know it is national in this respect that every taxpayer in Western Australia has to pay towards what is lost on the scheme. If there is any scheme started for Perth, Perth has to pay for it every time; Perth has to pay for what it uses, but if on the other hand, any scheme for any place does not pay working expenses it becomes equally as national as the Goldfields Water Scheme is at present. I look at this matter simply from a business standpoint, and if we can relieve the taxpayers by utilising what is now gong to waste we should do so. The thanks of the House are due to Mr. Patrick for the way he has brought this matter forward. Mr. Loton has gone so thoroughly into the matter and his arguments are not to be contradicted, and he has put the thing in such plain language, "that there is the water and there is nothing to do but to put a pipe down and use it," that there is no need for me to say anything on the subject. I have very much pleasure in supporting the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): I merely wish to say a few words on the motion. I had intended to deal fully with the question; but Dr. Hackett has dealt so fully and so ably with it and to a certain extent used arguments I had in my mind, that it is not necessary for me to weary the House by repeating them. The hon. member dealt very effectively with that phase of the question whether the water from Mundaring should form an efficient supply for the metropolitan area. Mr. Patrick's intentions are very good that we should provide sufficient revenue from the scheme to meet the cost of administration, interest, and sinking fund. We are all desirous of doing that, but I do not know that the House should commit itself to a motion of this

kind unless we can show how that state of affairs is to be brought about. Undoubtedly if ever there was a national work it is the Goldfields Water Scheme. Mr. Clarke has just said that he cannot see why this should be treated as a national work any more than say the water supply for the metropolitan area; but the two schemes stand on an entirely different footing: one is a domestic supply of water just as we might supply food or clothing, and therefore the people are entitled to pay for it; in the other scheme the domestic supply forms a very small part, because the supply is provided mainly for a great industry, the greatest industry of the State, one from which every man in the State gets considerable indirect benefits. That is the reason why one should be classed as a national scheme and not as if it were purely a domestic supply. It pays the country to spend this £80,000. Let me explain that it is thought by a good many who do not take particular interest in the question that this £80,000 goes towards working costs or towards supplying the goldfields people with water. That is not the case at all. It simply goes to supply the sinking fund or to pay off the money while the asset still remains.

Hon. W. Patrick: Surely no one is so stupid as that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: These things are said over and over again, I do not say by any member of this House, but the public are too apt to take the meaning wrongly. It has been clearly shown that if this money is to be made up it cannot be done by supplying the metropolitan area with water. I think that has been clearly shown by Dr. Hackett, and his remarks are supported by the report of the Commission, which consisted of a number of well qualified men, who recently handed in their report after spending many months over the work. It is all very well for members, as Mr. Loton did, to waive that report aside and work on a basis of their own and say this scheme is an eight million gallons a day scheme, and therefore all we have to do is to put a pipe in and supply the metropolitan area.

Surely in matters of this kind—I was going to say in a great engineering work, but particularly in a water supply above everything—we must work on sure lines and must be guided by experienced engineers. Now what do these gentlemen say on this particular question? The Commission reported:—

“The gaugings at Mundaring Weir show that from the present works the maximum output for a cycle of dry years is 5½ million gallons per day. It is not impossible that a longer series of dry years such as 1901 and 1902 may be experienced, and it is therefore, impossible to rely with safety on a greater output than five million gallons from the reservoir as it now stands.

They are emphatic on that point—

Figures are given to show that during the four years 1904 to 1907 the water did not reach a lower level than 4ft. 9in. below the crest of the weir, and the volume of water stored was never less than 3,810 million gallons (the maximum capacity being 4,600 million gallons). Also that the quantities which have flowed over the crest of the weir have ranged from 1,600 million gallons in 1903 to 19,400 million gallons in 1905. It is stated that if a continuance of these conditions could be relied on, the present reservoir would be capable of supplying to Perth a much larger quantity than is at present demanded of it without in any way endangering the supply to the fields.”

I wish to draw members' attention to that point because there seemed to have been a misunderstanding when Dr. Hackett was speaking. The report says:—

“If the Mundaring reservoir had been full in 1900 the drawer of five and a half million gallons a day would have emptied it before the end of 1902-3 summer after making due allowances for evaporation and inflow.”

That is their opinion on the question. They say first it is a five million gallons a day scheme and no more; secondly, there must be from their calculations and deductions a four million gallons a day reserve for the goldfields, and that only leaves one million gallons a day for the metropolitan area. That being so there

is no need to put any farther pipes or do anything farther to supply both places from Mundaring without a new weir were built or the present weir was raised. The pipe at present has a farther carrying capacity of one million gallons a day, which is five million gallons, being the capacity of the weir. I do not wish to say more on the question whether the scheme should be made to pay by bringing water to Perth or not. I do not express any opinion about it. But we ought to be guided—I do not say the Government are going to accept the report—but we ought to be guided by the report of the engineers who were qualified and who sat for many months making calculations. If this scheme will not supply Perth it cannot be made to pay from the goldfields. Mr. Patrick in his arguments said that he found no fault with the price charged to the railways and the mines; that the price was fair enough. If that is so, then the only way to remedy the matter as far as the goldfields are concerned is to raise the price of the domestic supply. Let me inform members that the mines and the railways business represents 64 per cent. of the total income; and the water rates and meter rents represent 19 per cent. That is a total of 83 per cent., leaving only 17 per cent. for domestic supplies. I do not think the hon. member intends to advocate that we should raise the price to the domestic consumer, in order to make up the eighty thousand odd pounds. Granted, for the sake of argument it is so, he surely does not mean to say that the rent of meters and the rate should be increased. Suppose we were to try and raise the price what would be the result? A person will use a certain quantity of water for domestic purposes and garden purposes. His income will only allow him to pay a certain amount for water, and if he can obtain ten thousand gallons for £5, he will afford it. But if the price is doubled he only takes five thousand gallons. I do not think the hon. member for a moment knew that the domestic supply only represented 17 per cent.

Mr. Patrick: I was aware of it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the hon. member was aware of that and

he asserted that the mines and the railways paid quite enough, did he intend that we should treble the rates on the domestic consumers to make up the difference? If we sell a certain quantity of water at a reasonable price and we are satisfied the people cannot take more or will not take more at the price, what is the next best thing to do? To give it to them at the best price possible. Is it not better to get even 6d. for the water than to see it flowing over the weir? The actual cost, allowing for actual wear and tear of machinery, for pumping to the goldfields is 9d. or 10d., and the rates charged are 10s. at Bulong down to 4s. or 5s. in Kalgoorlie. And in order to induce people to establish gardens in Kalgoorlie, when a certain quantity of water has been used, all over that quantity is charged for at 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons. The same system is adopted in regard to bowling greens and racecourses, and members know that the racecourse on the goldfields is kept in fine condition and the trustees are only induced to do this by the Government giving them water at a cheap rate. That is the system which has been followed, and the output has gradually increased. It would certainly be a fatal mistake and it would inflict great hardship on people if they had to pay more for their water, for the simple reason that the people would not be able to take the water. On the other hand the department would not derive a penny more revenue but probably a great deal less. I want members to bear one thing in mind. There was one mistake made and one mistake only, and that is the engineers allowed too much. The weir is too big probably for the goldfields, as it has been proved, and too small for Perth and the goldfields. But that was not the difficulty so much. The cost of the weir was only one item, but the cost of the pumps and the pipes was in the same proportion. We have to-day pumps capable of raising five and a-half million gallons a day, and they will raise six or six and a-half million gallons a day. And the Government are paying three times the interest and sinking fund they should because the pumps are more powerful than necessary. That alone would

run into thousands of pounds a year. With the bigger machines the cost of working and the depreciation is greater, and the same thing applies exactly to the pipes. They can carry to the goldfields five million gallons a day at very little increased cost over two millions gallons a day. If we bring water to Perth there will still be the trouble with regard to the size of the pipes and pumps, and the ratepayers at Perth and Fremantle and the metropolitan area will be asked to pay that which is now distributed, and rightly so too, over the whole of the taxpayers. Whilst it is fair and reasonable if the water is brought to Perth and Fremantle that the people should pay interest and sinking fund for the reason we have stated, it is no loss to the country to keep up a national scheme of that kind, because the indirect benefit that every man, woman, and child receives from the scheme somewhat compensates. There are mines working to-day, dozens of them employing hundreds of men who would not be working if they had not the water scheme, and the big mines could not pay the dividends they do and could not keep the staff they do were it not for the water scheme. They would only get the rich stuff and not the poor ore, consequently the number of men employed would be reduced if we had not the water scheme. I had intended to touch on the remarks made by two members with regard to the Canning scheme, but Dr. Hackett has dealt with that, and I will not say anything farther than this, that during the time the member was speaking someone interjected that members would never see the engineer's report this session, a *précis* having been published. I can assure members that the report is in the hands of the printer, and I can give members the assurance that it will be here before the House goes into recess. The Government are just as desirous as members that the full report shall be in the hands of members; but the printer is somewhat rushed as he usually is at the end of the session, with the Bills and *Hansard*. But he promised that the report should be here next Tuesday. That did not satisfy the Minister, who has definitely given instructions

that the report must be provided by Saturday next. I do not think I have anything farther to add. I find no fault with the wording of the motion that the scheme should provide interest and sinking fund if possible, but I do not think it is right for the House to assert that the scheme should be made to pay its way without showing a reasonable way of it doing so, and I maintain that has not been shown.

At 6.15, the President left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West) : I should like to say a few words on this question, which has occupied a good deal of attention. I shall not pose as an engineer or a scientific man; but I can say I have had a long experience of watercourses in the Darling Range, for many miles, and I own land situated on several of those streams. If the Helena river is anything like all the other brooks and rivers with which I am acquainted in that part of the country, I have no doubt that the supply of water will not only be ample for the requirements of Perth and suburbs as well as the goldfields, but there will be plenty to spare. I remember when the Goldfields Water Scheme was first before the House some members who were strongly opposed to the scheme said that not half enough water could be conserved in the Mundaring reservoir. I think it is fully proved that the drain on the reservoir has made very little difference to the level of the water. According to my experience in the ranges, not only on my own property but on dozens of other properties with which I am acquainted, as soon as one ringbarks the trees and clears the undergrowth, springs break out in all directions, and it is astonishing to me that this has not happened along the Helena. Another thing. On all those rivers, for weeks after the rainfall has ceased, small brooks and gullies are fed by springs which take their rise in the higher hills and supply the rivers. This surely must happen in the Helena catchment; so I think the allowance made by Mr. Loton when he said we should have to provide

for certain dry months in the year was a very ample allowance, for there is seldom more than six months to provide for even in the driest season. We have it on record that the dam is overflowing until well into November, sometimes to the middle of the month; and we usually get rains, sometimes abundant rains, in April. But apart from that, when we consider what a small impression the present draw from the dam has made, according to various speakers, the level of the water having been lowered by only four feet nine inches, representing the greatest consumption in any one year; if the reservoir be made to provide a two years' supply for the goldfields, I fail to see why, even assuming we have a year without rain, that we should have any hesitation in drawing upon the dam for other purposes. I do not think there is the slightest reason to fear that we shall not get our usual rains. The dam is sure to be filled to overflowing every year. I contend that we shall have quite sufficient water for all our requirements, and plenty to spare. I cannot divest myself of the opinion, notwithstanding the pronouncements of engineers and scientists, that there is no need to construct an expensive reservoir at the Canning or any other place. We can very well make use of the surplus water at Mundaring, and we shall then to a great extent at all events make up the deficiency on the goldfields scheme; nor do I see how the cost of obtaining water from Mundaring will be such a burden on the ratepayers of Perth and the adjoining towns. If they pay for water they consume, they are only paying for what they get, and surely that payment cannot constitute a heavy burden. If the supply came from any other source, they would have to pay for it all the same. I fail to see how they can get better water than is obtainable from the Helena; hence there can be no object in spending a large sum of money for any of the other schemes proposed. Again, if the supply from the present Mundaring dam proves to be insufficient, surely the scheme of constructing another weir lower down across the Helena can be adopted. There is now an immense quantity of water running to

waste from the Mundaring weir. I can hardly understand what Dr. Hackett meant when he said the engineers were of opinion that all the available water would be required for the metropolitan district and suburbs in the near future. I decline to believe that the number of brooks and rivers running between here and twenty-five miles south do not show more water going to waste every year than would supply these places twenty times over. Take the Serpentine River alone. Anyone who knows that river as I know it, from its mouth at Mandurah Estuary for miles back, knows that for month after month in the year it floods the whole country with a sea of water in places half a mile wide. It is absurd to think that all this water will be required for Perth and suburbs. In my humble opinion the proper plan is to make use of the surplus water at Mundaring, and that should be done to make good the great loss shown on the Coolgardie Water Scheme. I quite approve of the motion, for the introduction of which Mr. Patrick is to be commended. It is high time that the Goldfields Water Scheme was put on a sound basis. I believe that when the timber is cleared from the catchment of the Helena River, supplies of water will be kept up during the dry season as well as the rainy season. I have paddocks in the hills which in summer were as dry as this floor. But after I had the timber ringbarked and the blackboys and other undergrowth chopped down, those paddocks have now in many places beautiful streams of water filling the brooks and pouring down into the adjoining river. I see no reason why that should not happen on the Helena catchment.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD (Metropolitan-Suburban): After the extremely vigorous speeches delivered on this question, especially that by Mr. Loton, very little remains to be said from the same standpoint. But now that the country is faced with a degree of financial stringency, every effort should be made to look around for fresh avenues through which to dispose of the commodity we have in such vast abundance in the hills.

Probably if the Coolgardie Water Scheme had been showing a profit, and the debit of £84,000 had not been a charge against the consolidated revenue, we might not have heard so much about tapping the Mundaring scheme for metropolitan requirements. But the present financial position has emphasised the matter, and brought it before the House and the country. I was not quite clear, when Mr. Patrick spoke, as to the exact meaning of his motion. One could easily read into it words to the effect that the charges to the goldfields customers ought to be increased by fifty per cent. I do not think that is what the hon. member means, and if he does mean that I can hardly see my way to support him. But if he means looking around for fresh avenues for the disposal of the water, and especially looking towards the western district, the City of Perth and suburbs, I think it would have been better had he included that proposition in the motion, so that there should have been no misunderstanding either in this House or anywhere in the country with regard to the proposition upon which we shall presently vote. We had the engineers' point of view presented very strongly before us by the Hon. Dr. Hackett, and we have had the business point of view and the taxpayers' point of view on the other hand presented by the Hon. Mr. Loton. To a very large extent it is the taxpayers' point of view that concerns this House more than the other. I do not for one moment wish to undervalue the report submitted by this board. We have not had the opportunity of seeing the report, although it has been promised again and again. It has not come to light yet, except in the form of a very short summary which appeared in the newspapers. Whether we are prepared on the dictum of that board to spend a large sum of money in building the new reservoir I am not prepared to say. The members of the board may be first-class experts, although I do not know them personally; still I know that the Goldfields Water Scheme was reported on in the first instance by one of the highest and best experts in the world. Before the country is put to the expense of building a new reservoir we should

have an opinion as to its absolute necessity from someone of world-wide experience. [*Members: Hear, hear.*] The mere fact that the Government at the present time are engaged in a squabble with members of the board as to the payment of fees is derogatory to the Government and to the board, and will tend to lessen the influence which that report might have on the country. The water question is of the greatest importance to the city and suburbs. None can say for a moment that we are well supplied with water in this district. Perth is not well supplied, the suburbs distinctly are not well supplied, and we should welcome a supply of pure water from the hills. In the districts of Claremont and Cottesloe there is a population perhaps of 10,000 which is supplied with hot water from the Claremont bore. In that water you can boil eggs and cook fish, and, as a matter of fact, it spoils all plant life. The one thing it is good for is tepid baths. In these two districts there are between 400 and 500 windmills, which cost from £5 to £10 each per annum to keep in order. We will gladly welcome a supply from the hills and pay a fair price for it in order to do away with this great annual cost. Most of us have three supplies which we use; namely, windmills, bore water, and rain water. A hasty decision in connection with this matter is to be deprecated, because a mistake once made would be very hard to remedy, and in connection with a water supply no risk should be taken. Now as to this report of which we have heard so much, until it has had the scrutiny of those able to criticise it I personally should prefer to delay expressing an opinion upon it. This is the position at present. We have a huge commodity running to waste in the hills, while here we have a huge consuming population waiting for it. At present the country is faced with a deficit. Common sense and common business principles would lead one to think that we should tap that supply to some extent. What is going to happen in the future, and what will be the needs of the city 10 years hence I cannot say; but the tapping of that supply to a limited degree at present would decrease to some

extent the £84,000 deficiency which now occurs annually in connection with the Mundaring supply.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Can you give us the figures to prove that?

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: Yes, to this extent. In the districts of Claremont and Cottesloe there are between 400 and 500 windmills, which cost from £5 to £10 per annum to keep in order. We would be very glad to do away with those windmills, and to put the cost into water obtained from the Mundaring Weir.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: How would that relieve the £84,000?

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: Because the water would be sold.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: It depends upon the price.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: The cost of getting it to Claremont and Cottesloe would not be great, as it would come to us by gravitation. We would be prepared to pay a fair price in order to have the commodity. It is only a question of a business arrangement to bring the customer and the seller together. In the districts I have mentioned alone it would mean a revenue, judging from the figures I have quoted, of about £2,000 a year.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Will they pay a penny towards the deficit of £84,000?

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: If they get the water they will pay for it like anyone else.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: That is not the question.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: The residents would pay for the water right willingly.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: But they would not pay any more than that.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: They would not need to pay any more. I should be glad if the mover would amend his motion in the direction I have indicated.

Hon. R. F. SHOLL (North): I did not intend to speak on this question, but really, after listening to the able speech by Dr. Hackett, I was unable to follow the logic of the conclusions he arrived at. There are thousands of millions of water running into the sea from Mundaring every year, and surely it would assist the scheme to a con-

siderable extent if some of that water were sold at a profit. By that means the scheme, instead of running at a loss of £84,000 a year, would probably be able to pay expenses. The water would come down by gravitation, and what costs 5d. a thousand gallons could be sold for 1s. 6d., the price we are now paying for the wretched stuff served out to the people of the metropolitan area. The water we get now is obtained from bores put down in different parts of the country. The motion after all leaves the position open, for it is only a resolution to the effect that in the opinion of the House the Government should do something to reduce the deficiency. It is not proposed, nor does the mover suggest that an extra burden should be put on the fields, but merely that the Government should ascertain whether something cannot be done to use that water which is now running to waste. We have not had the same advantage, as has Dr. Hackett, of reading the report. I notice that it is in print, and there is no reason whatever, as the type is set up, why the Government Printer should not have struck off 300 or 400 copies and distributed them. If the report were a written one the reason could be understood, but it appears clearly that the Government do not want to give that report. When a motion of this kind is before the House a report should be placed before every member. Dr. Hackett quoted certain figures, and if the figures he quoted, astonishing as they appear to be, are correct, then he has made out a very good case, showing that it would be inadvisable to enter into the scheme of bringing water from Mundaring. This is also taking it for granted that the contention of the so-called experts—I hope they are experts—is correct. I cannot agree with Dr. Hackett and the experts, however, that the cost would be so great as they say. We have the foundations there for an extensive scheme that now is much larger than is required. It is absurd to argue that increasing the height of the wall would cost such an enormous sum. The Hon. Mr. Wright has already said that the catchment area has been obtained, and it is

inconceivable that it would cost more to extend the present scheme than to adopt a larger one in a new locality without a catchment area. I cannot believe that the figures quoted will bear scrutiny.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: They have not the catchment area at Mundaring they would require.

Hon. R. F. SHOLL: You cannot alter the features of the country and the fact remains that sufficient water now runs into the weir. Therefore there must be a sufficient catchment area. A decision as to the best scheme is a matter for experts, but I am going to support the hon. member in his motion which says that in the opinion of the House it is desirable that this £84,000 loss should be reduced. It is not for us to say how the loss should be reduced, that is for the professional officers of the Government to recommend upon. If they cannot do so, that has nothing to do with members. As a layman I am not going to take the responsibility on my shoulders of pitting my opinion against that of the expert officers of the Government. While on this question I should like to say that though a board of professional gentlemen has reported on this scheme, I am satisfied the proposed undertaking would cost considerably over a million of money, and the Government ought not to adopt a scheme of that magnitude without first obtaining the advice of the best hydraulic engineers of the world. Even though it may cost £25,000 or £30,000 to obtain that advice, still it should be secured. I understand the members of the board are not qualified as hydraulic engineers. No doubt they are good men and gave honest advice according to their lights; but personally I should not be satisfied with that advice, were I contemplating the expenditure of over a million of money on a water supply scheme. The advice may be good and in conformity with the best available information; but it would be more satisfactory to the public to know that it is confirmed by the opinions of men who have made a life-long study of questions of this character. The last report issued in connection with the Goldfields Water Supply is not encouraging. On page 19 of the annual

report of the scheme, referring to the operations for the year ended June 30th 1907, the following passage occurs:—

“Corrosion is also going on inside of the pipe, and the usual nodules are being formed on the inner surface of the metal. This is evident from the steady increase in the friction throughout the line. The increase is on some parts of the line more rapid than was originally anticipated, and the very high efficiency so far obtained from the pumping machinery will not be maintained much longer at some stations without a considerable outlay to meet the changed conditions.”

It is a serious thing that our pumping machinery is evidently in such a condition of disrepair that efficiency cannot be maintained without considerable outlay to meet the changed conditions.

The Colonial Secretary: Does the report say an outlay on machinery, or on pipes?

Hon. R. F. SHOLL: The pumping machinery has nothing to do with the pipes. It may be intended to refer to the pipes, but it is not so stated. We know the pumping machinery is not working up to more than 50 per cent. of its power; and if, as suggested by interjection, the meaning of the report is that consequent on leakages in the pipes it will be necessary to work the pumping plant at something nearer its full capacity, that may be the meaning, but such meaning is not conveyed by the words quoted. If the passage were intended to refer to expenditure on pipes, there would be no mention of machinery, for the machinery is capable of pumping five million gallons per day and is not worked up to more than one-half that quantity.

Hon. G. Randell: The explanation is that the increased friction consequent on internal corrosion interferes with the efficiency of the pumping.

Hon. R. F. SHOLL: They are using more power than would be necessary were there no leakages; and the engineer says it may not be possible to maintain its present high efficiency. He goes on to say:—

“Where pipes have been removed and the interior has been inspected, the

nodules observed have been rather less numerous than the rise in friction indicated. It is most probable that internal corrosion is going on more rapidly in some portions of the main than in others. This is no doubt due to the coating being better on some pipes than on others."

It is a serious matter to contemplate, that the life of these pipes is likely to prove not so long as was anticipated; for the renewal of the pipes will cost an immense sum in the future, and instead of a deficiency of £84,000 per annum, the shortage will continue to increase. I have always held that Northam was a particularly fortunate town in the expenditure of public money, and it always seems to get a little the better of the other towns of the State; for I notice by this report that again Northam has secured preferential treatment as compared with other places. The report shows that the charge for water supplied to the town of Northam was on a rate of tenpence in the pound, while the charge for water to users at places such as Chidlow's Well, Sawyers' Valley, and Mundaring was on a rate of one shilling in the pound. The rate in Perth is 1s. in the pound, and this rate has to be paid on vacant land as well as on improved properties; so that an owner having an untenanted house valued at £120 would be compelled to pay £6 to the Waterworks Board, whether any water was used in connection with the premises or not. Yet the favoured town of Northam, which has already had so much out of this country and been built up at the expense of the State is charged only on a rate of 10d. in the pound, 2d. lower than Perth. I do not know how it was managed, but I think the water rate for Northam should be increased to at least equal that charged to Chidlow's Well, Sawyers' Valley, and Mundaring; and we might even add 6d. to that rate in the case of Northam, as the water has to be pumped to a greater distance. I have nothing farther to say than that before embarking on any water supply scheme likely to involve an expenditure of over a million pounds, the Government should first obtain the ad-

vice of the best hydraulic engineers in the world, even if that advice costs thousands of pounds. A point was mentioned to-night by Dr. Hackett, which had also struck me. It was that we are about starting on a sewerage scheme for the metropolitan districts; but before that can be made efficient we must have a better water supply, sufficient in quantity to allow of the flushing of the sewers. If we have not a sufficient supply of water for this purpose a sewerage scheme will be likely to become an absolute menace to public health. In this matter the Government are putting the cart before the horse: we should have an adequate water supply before embarking on a sewerage scheme.

Hon. W. PATRICK (in reply as mover): I do not think it will be necessary for me to reply at length, for as I understand members' remarks, the trend of the debate has been in favour of the motion. I should, however, like to say a few words in reference to some remarks that have fallen from members, in order to put those members on the right track and to at the same time justify my action. I think it was Mr. McKenzie who introduced the question of coastal jealousy towards the goldfields, and Mr. Bellingham also touched on it. I do not object, for the reason that I know their remarks were based on an entire misunderstanding of my attitude. It is not at all likely I would be antagonistic to the goldfields, seeing that I represent in this House the second greatest goldfield in the State, and my province includes five or six other goldfields more extensive than some of those fields to which railways are being constructed. I thought I had made my position on this matter perfectly clear by the attitude I have taken since entering the House. Speaking on the Address-in-Reply in 1905, I spoke strongly as to the huge quantity of water at Mundaring deliberately allowed to run to waste. There is only one way by which waste water can be utilised, that is by tapping the Mundaring reservoir and supplying Perth and the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. W. Hackett : What is the meaning of your motion, what is to be done with it ?

Hon. W. PATRICK : I will tell that presently. Mr. Glowrey has suggested I should withdraw the motion. I may describe Mr. Glowrey as the embodiment of the *suaviter in modo*, and perhaps my friend Dr. Hackett will regard it in the light of a compliment if I refer to him as the *fortitur in re*.

Hon. J. W. Hackett : But that does not answer my question.

Hon. W. PATRICK : I propose, after making my reply, to leave the House to say what is to be done with the resolution when passed. I have said on several occasions, and I said it when introducing the motion this session, and I made it more prominent in the previous session, that I have no complaint to make so far as the charge to the mines on the goldfields is concerned. I pointed out specifically that the portion of the goldfields called the Golden Mile was the only portion of the scheme that showed any profit ; and it would be absurd to make any complaint in that regard ; but the profit of £5,000 obtained on the Golden Mile last year was wasted in other directions ; at any rate the water was sold in other directions at a price which had to be made up out of the profit made on the Golden Mile. I think it was Mr. Throssell who made a very nice oration on the greatness of the scheme and on the tremendous benefits it had conferred on the State. The hon. member said that at present the Government found themselves able to supply large quantities of water for which they had no customers, and that it was necessary to seek for new customers. He pointed out that there was a possible market for surplus water by using it along the line from Northam towards Kalgoorlie for irrigation purposes. Dr. Hackett suggested that a large quantity of this water might be used at about 6d. per thousand gallons by the farmers, but the hon. member specifically objected to terming it "for irrigation purposes." The hon. member is practically right, because it is utterly impossible for anyone to pay 6d. a thousand gallons for water for irrigation

purposes. I was engaged for a number of years in the West Indies and had a practical experience of what irrigation means, and I know approximately the cost of water at Mildura and Renmark in the other States, and in no case would it pay anyone to pay more than 1d. to 1½d. per thousand gallons for water for irrigation purposes. No farmer would pay even 6d. per thousand gallons except for water for his stock, and no doubt it would be very handy for him for that purpose. But if all the farmers from Northam to Kalgoorlie and on 20 miles on either side of the pipe line took water for their stock from the Goldfields Water Scheme it would have little effect on the consumption. A lot of misconception appears as to the supply of water to the Railway Department. Mr. McKenzie, and I think also Dr. Hackett, referred incidentally to the same thing, but Mr. McKenzie said, the Railway Department had not been treating the scheme fairly ; that is to say, they had not been buying enough water ; and Mr. Glowrey spoke in similar terms. It is not necessary to repeat what they said ; but what they really meant was that the Railway Department ought to pay a great deal more for the water than they are paying at present.

Hon. J. T. Glowrey : I merely pointed out the saving it was to the Railway Department.

Hon. W. PATRICK : I think it was Mr. Drew who drew attention to the fact that the Railway Department pay more than the market value ; that is to say, making a comparison with the prices charged to other people along the line, the department are paying considerably more than any other customers of the Goldfields Water Supply. I think Mr. Glowrey referred to a letter written by Sir John Forrest, to which letter I also referred when introducing this motion. This letter was about the Railway Department's saving £70,000 or £100,000 per annum, that if the department now paid as much for the water used on the railways as they did before the initiation of the Goldfields Water Scheme, they would require to pay £70,000 or £100,000 more for the water. Now, it so happens that a little information was supplied to this

House a few days ago in reply to an inquiry made by Mr. Glowrey. The hon. member asked what was the amount paid per annum by the Railway Department for water between Northam and Kalgoorlie for four years previous to the inauguration of the Goldfields Water Scheme; and the reply was briefly that the total amount in four years and some odd months previous to the inauguration of this scheme paid by the Railway Department for water was about £86,000. That disposes of the myth, the phantom figures that have been given, that the Railway Department should pay £70,000 or £100,000 more to-day if they paid as much now as they did before the inauguration of this scheme for water. As a matter of fact for the whole period before the inauguration of the scheme they paid less than £90,000. Of course I am replying to these different matters to put myself right in reference to what I said when introducing the motion; but not in any unfriendly spirit. None of us knew, until Mr. Glowrey put this question, the actual amount paid by the Railway Department before the inauguration of the Goldfields Water Supply. There was one remark made by Mr. McKenzie to the following effect: "In reference to the pipe line; if the goldfields petered out the Mundaring reservoir would still be there, and I venture to say that the pipes would also be there in 20 years' time and in as good order as to-day." And Mr. Glowrey made the statement that the corrosion in most cases has taken place outside the pipes, and that it was brought about by some chemical in the soil, and that members would find right along the line in places where the corrosion had taken place pipes had been stripped and were lying on blocks of wood. I can scarcely say anything farther than that the corrosion that is destroying the pipes is inside.

Hon. J. W. Wright: The Engineer's report says that.

Hon. W. PATRICK: The Engineer's report, as quoted by Mr. Sholl, shows that the corrosion is going on inside the pipes at such a rapid rate that it is to a large extent interfering with the efficiency of the pumps. By the inefficiency of the pumps they can form some idea as to the

amount of corrosion going on; and we know from the experience of last year that the cost of repairing the main is going to be considerably heavier in the future.

Hon. J. T. Glowrey: That has been considerably over-estimated; inquiries have been made since then.

Hon. W. PATRICK: In the Engineer's report of last year on the pipe line, it was pointed out that the repairing of 69 chains, or less than 7/8ths of a mile, and of the laying bare of about six miles and putting blocks of wood under the pipes, as referred to by Mr. Glowrey, cost £14,151 or 80 per cent. more than in the previous year; and we can imagine what it is likely to cost in the future. In stating my facts, I went entirely on the reports of the Government Engineer. I knew that I was on a perfectly safe course when I was taking the reports of the Government experts. My reason for referring to all these matters is that the House will have a thorough grasp of my object in bringing forward this motion. Mr. McKenzie referred, among other matters, to a reserve fund created during the last two years, of £11,000 each year, and he said he took it that fund was for renewal of pipes and repair of engines in future. I am glad the hon. member drew attention to this. I can say that no such fund exists in the sense of being a reserve fund. That £22,000, which is called the reserve fund, as pointed out by the Auditor General, exists in the form of capital used by the administrators of the water supply for store purposes, and exists I suppose as wheel-barrows and pipes and such like. It can in no sense be called a reserve fund.

Hon. J. T. Glowrey: There is a reserve fund.

Hon. R. F. Sholl: Represented by stores.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I should say a reserve fund consists of something that is earmarked, something we can lay our hands on in the shape of hard cash for the purpose for which it has been laid aside. After all, one of the main reasons why I introduced this motion, and it was entirely on my own initiative after studying it for two or three years,

was to consider this question from the financial point of view. As time goes on the financial position certainly does not improve. The latest report with the usual kind of scare lines in the papers reads "Goldfields Water Supply, Total Consumption; Gratifying Increase." Then it points out a considerable increase in the consumption; a considerable increase in the revenue and an equal increase in the expenditure. [*Hon. R. F. Sholl*: And an equal depreciation I suppose.] As the Auditor General points out, there is not a single farthing allowed for depreciation since the scheme was inaugurated. For the four months ending October last, while there was an increase of about 40,000,000 gallons in consumption, and that is nothing at all, being a drop in the ocean compared with the reservoir, there was no gain whatever to the State from the financial point of view. The revenue accruing was £59,000, and for the corresponding four months of the previous year it was £56,000; the expenditure was £17,000 and £20,000. The arguments that have been used are that all this surplus water can be converted into cash at nominal rate and increased revenue will accrue. But the working of the scheme shows that in every case where there was increased pumping and increased supply, there was increased expenditure equivalent to the increased revenue. There is one point that the man in the street would not notice in connection with this latest report in the newspapers, that the supplementary expenditure is increasing at an alarming rate. At the end of October it was £301,000, and on the 30th June last it was £267,000. In other words there was no increase in net revenue, though there was increased consumption, and the expenditure was £34,000 more on capital. Members must know what the result would be if that went on. The supplementary capital is becoming a huge thing in itself. I quite agree with Dr. Hackett when he says that after all the question resolves itself into supplying the metropolitan area with the surplus water, if the surplus water is there, or going elsewhere for it. If we go elsewhere the whole thing is blocked.

I made no insinuation whatever. Dr. Hackett did not mention names, but he said certain members made insinuations against the *bona fides* of some member of the Government; that there was some axe to grind in connection with the matter.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: I do not think I said that.

Hon. W. PATRICK: The member did not use the words "axe to grind," I beg the member's pardon. He said the same thing in more refined language.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Beg my pardon for the earlier part of the sentence you have just used.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I think the hon. member said something of that kind; he used the word "insinuation" there is no doubt about that. He said that certain members made insinuations.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: I did not.

Hon. W. PATRICK: What did you say?

Hon. J. W. Hackett: You ought to remember; I said that I disliked insinuations.

Hon. W. PATRICK: The member said it negatively, not positively. I do not know whether what I said was an insinuation.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: No, you were not in it.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I said distinctly—after reading a portion of the report, which I understand, and I am prepared to take the member's word for it, gives a good idea of the report which should have been laid on the table of the House a long time ago, and if there are no printers in Perth who can print a document of that kind in 10 weeks then we want new printers—what I did say was that after reading the report on the Canning scheme, because it was a report on a Canning scheme entirely, it appeared to me there was a distinct bias in favour of a Canning scheme of some kind. Dr. Hackett said the Commission reported on two schemes, but if my memory serves me rightly, on reading the report in the *West Australian*, they reported on three schemes, and they tabulated the three schemes in order of merit, according to the opinions of the experts. They drew

attention to the fact that the water in the Mundaring weir and in the Upper Canning were equally pure; there would be a fair supply from either. The water in the Lower Canning had a drawback—I do not know if they used those words, but that was what it amounted to—because there was settlement on the banks, and it would cost a considerable sum of money to repurchase the land, otherwise the water would be polluted. Their final report was to this effect:—first of all we recommend the Upper Canning, secondly we recommend the Lower Canning scheme, and thirdly we recommend the Mundaring scheme. I pointed out at that time the recommendation was opposed to the opinions expressed in a previous portion of the report. I may say—it may have been a case of unconscious cerebration at the time—it was after reading a minute handed to me by Mr. Wright that I thought there was a bias, and I think members will agree with me if there was not a bias there was some reason why the report was practically in favour of the Canning scheme. Here is the memo. handed to me:—

“Extract from a letter written to the members of the board by the Under-Secretary for Water Supply, dated 8th February, 1907. It is proposed that the scope of inquiry should be limited to an examination as to the feasibility of supplying from the Canning only on the lines put up by this department.”

I have not a single word to say against the members of the board; I have no personal knowledge of any member of the board; I have no word to say against the Under-Secretary for Works, because when he sent the minute it would be under instructions. It would have been much better that we should have been distinctly told that it was the policy of the Government to construct a scheme on the Canning without taking into consideration any other scheme whatever.

The Colonial Secretary: Read the whole letter, that is only an extract.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I have not the whole letter. When you say an inquiry shall be limited to one scheme, and one

scheme only, it is not necessary to go farther into the matter. The chief point made by Dr. Hackett in his speech was against tapping the Mundaring Reservoir and was based on the report of the engineers, and he laid special stress on the gauge of the Helena River carried out, I suppose, by those engineers.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: No.

Hon. W. PATRICK: No matter who carried it out; it does not matter a straw. The point was this, that had the Helena river been full at a certain period, and there had been no rain for two years, the reservoir would have been empty if $5\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons a day had been withdrawn for two years in succession. The first year that water ran into the reservoir there certainly was only 500 million gallons or 600 million gallons impounded. It was specially pointed out in the report that in the area of the Helena reservoir, during a series of years since it started, the relation of inflow to rainfall had so happened—and I need scarcely point out to members who have had anything to do with sinking dams, the first time that water runs into any reservoir in a dry climate such as we have in Australia, the greater portion of the water is absorbed by the bottom and sides of the dam. Members can imagine what an enormous quantity of soakage there would be when the water first ran into the reservoir. I am not going to stand here as an engineering expert. I am going to base my remarks on the reports of the Government engineers, and the reports point out that in the first year so little water ran into the reservoir—only .2 per cent. of the rainfall went into the reservoir, while the following year, when a portion of the bank and the bottom were soaked with water $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the rainfall went into the reservoir, and ever since that time it has been from 3 to 7 per cent. It is perfectly plain to anyone who knows what is the usual behaviour of a new reservoir, and taking into consideration the reports of the engineers themselves, that only $2\frac{1}{2}$ as against .2 per cent., that is twelve times as much water, went into the reservoir the second year. It is perfectly plain why so little water went into the reservoir the

first year. During the last four years never less than 3,800 million gallons of water have been impounded at the end of our dry summer. Mr. Wright, when speaking on the motion, pointed out that during the different years the water was overflowing the weir from 100 to 149 days, but 100 days was the shortest period that the water was running over the weir. I will not pose as an engineering expert. It is not necessary. The engineering work has been done. The weir has been built. All that Mr. O'Connor prophesied has turned out to be true, and I have no doubt truer than he expected. But suppose that every year the weir overflowed for 100 days in the year, 4,600 million gallons would be impounded at the end of the rainy season, and 265 days remain. Now strange to say, Mr. Loton pointed out that it would be possible to take 8 million gallons per day with safety from that reservoir. If we take 8 million gallons per day for 265 days during a dry season there will still be over 2,000 million gallons left in the reservoir. But it seems to me that we must anticipate ordinary probabilities. That is what we do in every-day life. We all carry on our businesses as if we were immortal; not as if we anticipated dying in a few days; and we do not think we are likely to have a two-years drought in this State. In our business affairs we never look forward to catastrophes; yet that, it seems to me, is what the engineers have been doing when they assume the possibility of a two years' drought.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: There must be no risk in this case.

Hon. W. PATRICK: That is entirely a matter of opinion. It is not a matter of fact. We can deal with the years since the reservoir first became full. Mr. McLarty pointed out that he had experience of this State for some twenty-nine or thirty years; and he has no recollection of such a drought as is regarded by the engineers as possible. I do not think it necessary for me to say anything farther, except that though I am a born optimist, I am not blind to the financial difficulties that will surround the Government in the almost immediate future. And certainly in my opinion it will be a piece of finan-

cial folly to spend about three-quarters of a-million on a new water scheme for the metropolitan district. Dr. Hackett made some remark to the effect that the people of Perth would not touch the Mundaring supply. The people of Perth are contributing towards the loss on the Goldfields Water Scheme; and if there were a new scheme contrived for Perth, they would have to pay the whole cost of the new scheme plus the loss on the goldfields scheme. Surely it would be wiser to save a portion of that expenditure. I do not think it necessary to say anything farther, for the discussion has been so elaborate that every member must be seized of the meaning of the motion.

Question put and passed.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT.

Machinery measure—Second reading.

Resumed from the previous day.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West): It is not my intention to-night to go very fully into this measure, which in another form has been discussed over and over again. I take it every member has made up his mind how he will vote. But it is up to me to say something on the Bill; and I will say first, I am absolutely certain that the throwing out of the Land Tax Assessment Bill on two or three former occasions has to a certain extent impressed on the Government the fact that they must economise. I am pleased to see that they have economised to a great extent; but I am absolutely certain, accepting the Government estimate of £80,000 to be raised through this Bill, they will not by this tax succeed in squaring the ledger. If the Minister told me that he expected to get something like half as much again, upon my word I should not believe him. However, I wish it to be understood that I for one will vote for the second reading of this Bill. I think it can safely be said some good has accrued from throwing out its predecessor. It is said we have no right to throw out this Bill. With that view I must emphatically disagree. We have a perfect right

to throw it out if we think fit, and to stand by the consequences; and I do not think the consequences would be very severe. However, I will vote for the Bill. I believe its introduction has done good; but while I will vote for the second reading I wish it to be clearly understood that I will not, without a bit of a fight, take the Bill exactly as it stands. First and foremost, I see it is somewhat different from the original Bill; but there are some old friends or old foes, whatever we choose to call them, in the exemption clauses. Some of my own electors have said to me, "If we are to have a land tax, let us all pay, with the exception of the immigrant; and if the immigrant who purchases land from the Government is to be exempted for five years from the tax, by the same rule the immigrant who purchases land from a private person should also be exempt." I wish the Minister to understand distinctly there are two courses of which I have the choice. One is to strike out the clause exempting those who purchase from the Government, or to add a clause that will entitle those who purchase say from the Midland Company to a like exemption for five years. [*Hon. J. W. Hackett*: Why?] When in Committee we shall be able to argue the why and wherefore. The other night I moved the adjournment of the debate, only for fear such a snap vote would be taken as was taken on a former occasion. Another clause to which I take exception provides that a person owning property to the unimproved value of £1,000 is entitled to an exemption of £250. I can lay my hands on different people in my electorate, each of whom owns property exceeding in value £1,000. Each would therefore be entitled to exemption. Suppose the property is mortgaged, we may safely say that one-third of the property belongs to the owner. At the same time, the owner would be entitled to the exemption; and I shall vote for sweeping away all exemptions, except a very small sum. When in Committee I shall do my level best to get those clauses altered, to make them accord with what I believe to be the opinion of a great many members of this House.

Hon. R. LAURIE (West): It is well-known that I intend to support the second reading; and farthermore, while I reserve to myself the right to amend the measure in some shape or other, I wish to make it perfectly clear that any amendments I may move will not have the effect of killing the measure. It pleases me much to hear Mr. Clarke say that he intends to vote for the second reading; and I hope, after the excellent example set by my colleague for the West Province (Mr. Moss), many other members will be found voting with him. The Leader of the House raised a question of the power of the Chamber to reject the Bill. Since my entry to this House I have always looked to one member as an authority on what is due to this House and on what the conduct of a member of this House ought to be; and I have always understood that while we have undoubtedly the right and privilege of introducing legislation in this House, we have not either the right or the privilege of introducing any taxation measure or money Bill, nor have we the right at any time to alter the Estimates sent down to us. That raises the question brought forward by the Leader of the House; and it is a question which I should have preferred to see dealt with by Mr. Moss—whether the House has a right to reject such a Bill as this. The Chief Justice of the High Court quoted a decision of the Privy Council in 1885, in regard to a conflict between the Houses of Parliament in Queensland, when the Privy Council decided that the Upper House had not a right to interfere as they had interfered with an appropriation measure, which is almost similar to the measure now before us. The hon. member to whom I have alluded has always kept away from deputations to a Minister to ask for money for his constituents. He has always laid it down that members of this House have no right to go on such deputations, that it is for members of the Lower House to do so. Therefore, when a measure of this character is brought forward, I consider that while we have the power and the undoubted right to hold up the measure, I say, after we have done that we

have done our duty. We can hold it up till we hear whether the country is or is not in favour of it. That opinion is borne out by Mr. Moss, who says if the present Government were out to-morrow and a Labour Government came in, we should probably get a similar Bill. If the present Government went out to-morrow and the two parties went to the country, both would be advocating the principles of taxation now placed before us. Is it to be said that this House will reject a measure which the Lower House would send back to us next session if the Lower House went to the country? As ten members of this House retire every two years, it would take four years to change the opinions of the House if we all held fast to the opinions expressed last session. Are we to say that we shall hold fast to our opinions, and reject a measure for which the voice of the country has declared?

Hon. C. A. Piesse: The country has never had a say in the matter.

Hon. R. LAURIE: Can the Hon. Mr. Piesse tell us that since this measure has been before the House there has been one meeting, from one end of the country to the other, at which the principle of taxation was opposed?

Hon. C. A. Piesse: Plenty of meetings.

Hon. R. LAURIE: It is a simple matter to say plenty, and to make assertions; but let the hon. member tell us where these meetings have been held. There may have been a few at Katanning, Wagin, or at Mundijong; but where has it been chronicled that public feeling of such a character has been manifested as to make this House state definitely that we shall reject the Bill? Too much use altogether has been made of this Chamber, and if members will seize the opportunity and reckon up their responsibilities to this country and say "We are no longer going to be made tools of by another place," the better for this House.

Hon. E. McLarty: That is just what we did.

Hon. R. LAURIE: That is just what we did not do. The hon. member's words last year were "The land tax I welcome because it is a more equitable form of taxation." My words on the other hand

were "The income tax I have no time for." With regard to the legal position of this Chamber, I would ask the legal members, the Hons. Mr. Moss, Dr. Hackett, and Mr. Haynes, to give us their opinion with regard to this question and upon the case which has been cited by the Colonial Secretary. It is quite possible that the lay mind cannot grasp a legal position such as that, and it would be far better if on this occasion we did as on every other, when a legal question is under discussion, ask for the advice of the hon. member for the West Province. The Hon. Mr. Moss in speaking on this particular case, which was heard by the Privy Council, said that the decision was theoretically correct. I have no doubt that he might come to the decision that it was absolutely correct. The Hon. Dr. Hackett has told us on more than one occasion, that in dealing with such a measure as this we should be very careful, while protecting the rights and privileges of this House, before rejecting such a proposal. His words have been proved to be absolutely correct, having been borne out in every detail by the judgment of the Privy Council in the matter of the Queensland Parliament. I intend to vote for the second reading; but I reserve to myself the right to deal with any amendment that may be brought forward. On the last occasion when the land tax was before the House a certain course was adopted by some members, which I greatly regret, and in voting against the Bill some members took action which I think they are sorry for to-day. [*Hon. E. McLarty:* I am not sorry.] Coming as that interjection does from the hon. member, I can only say that the finances of the State will benefit more from him if there is an income tax than if a land tax alone. Considering that there has been no expression of opinion from the country against this tax, and taking all other matters into consideration, I see no reason why the second reading should not be carried. If the Government were to decide to-morrow, if this Bill were thrown out, to go to the country, any Government that comes back again next session would have a direction from

the people to bring in such a measure as this again. It should not be forgotten that there is another Bill to come on later on, which will place it in our hands to pass this measure of taxation only for 12 months. Many arguments have been used, and particularly by those who have spoken before me, in connection with the cutting down of the Government subsidies or of doing away with them altogether. He would be a bold man who would say that the subsidies to municipalities and roads boards should be done away with altogether. If we did that we would bring about a very serious state of affairs in the country. At the end of 12 months if the Government refuse to cut down subsidies, votes of many kinds, and general administrative expenses we can hold up this question of taxation, or even refuse to grant it altogether. Last session I opposed every exemption in the land tax, with one exception, which was in connection with mining leases. I acted as I did in this particular case, as a protest against certain tactics in this House. Every member has a right to decide what course he should follow, and to join with others, if he chooses, in knocking out a particular measure. But on this occasion I hope the Bill will be dealt with in a fair, honest, and straightforward manner. If we pass the second reading, as I feel sure we will, and the Bill reaches the Committee stage, I am sure members will give amendments all the consideration they deserve. Remembering that we have twice thrown out a land tax and that there has been very little said in the country against the taxation proposals, I hope the Bill will be read a second time. I hope that members will consider very closely the question as to whether we have a right, after taking such a decided stand as we have in the past, and having uttered our protest, to throw the measure out on this occasion. I trust that every consideration will be given to the whole question before a decision is arrived at.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West): It is not my intention to make many remarks on the Bill before the House, for I think my views have been expressed

so often that they are pretty well known. I should like to say in the first place that the Hon. Mr. Laurie was not quite correct when he stated that I said last session the land tax was an equitable one.

Hon. R. Laurie: An income tax—not a land tax.

The Colonial Secretary: The Hon. Mr. Laurie said land tax, but meant income tax.

Hon. E. McLARTY: I always said the land tax was not an equitable one. Then with regard to the statement that no protests have been made against the tax, in my opinion public meetings were held in various places, and strong protests were made against the land tax. I had letters sent to me from different parts of the constituency asking me to oppose the measure, and objecting in the strongest terms to the tax. I have not changed my views as to the land tax. I regret very much that there is a necessity to bring it in again; but in keeping with other members, I realise the necessity for it, and agree that it is impossible to get away from the fact that our financial position calls for something being done. Considering that the Government have reconsidered this question, and have brought in with the land tax an income tax, which makes it a much more far-reaching Bill as it will touch almost everyone in the State, I feel it is my duty to assist the Government and to vote for the second reading. I have my own views as to whether the amount to be derived from the two taxes—although I think it will be much larger than was stated by the Treasurer—is going to make up the deficiency or meet all requirements. We heard yesterday from the Colonial Secretary that there was a considerable falling off in some of the items of revenue; and when we consider the racing pace at which the construction of public works is going on, works which we cannot expect to be reproductive for a considerable time, we will realise that it necessarily follows we are heaping up our interest and sinking fund to such an extent that it will be a great burden on the revenue of the State. We have done pretty well

in passing Bills for the construction of what I may term speculative railways. I am a great advocate for the construction of railways wherever I think there is a necessity for them, and where they will pay indirectly by increasing settlement on the land and opening up the country; but when we consider that we are now constructing a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman which I voted against, and which I view as being a very doubtful proposition; and a railway from Ravensthorpe to the coast, which is also a very doubtful proposition; and that we have a much larger work in contemplation, which is also a very speculative one, then I think we must be careful before passing any more railway propositions. The last work I referred to is one which I think the Government were quite justified in bringing in. I have advocated the construction of that line for several years, and I believe it will turn out in the end to be of great benefit to the State. I refer to the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway; but I think we have gone quite far enough in the construction of railways at present. I hope the Government will consider seriously before bringing in any more railway Bills. Captain Laurie remarked that the State would benefit from me more by imposing an income tax than a land tax. I have advocated that a land tax should be submitted with an income tax, and I admit I shall have to pay a good deal more under an income tax than under a land tax; but I say it is not a question how it affects me personally, but how it affects the country, and how people should contribute towards a tax of this kind. I contend that as we have a very unjust dividend duty imposed on incorporated companies doing business in this State, it is time we had an income tax to get at those wealthy firms who, not being incorporated, are not contributing a shilling under the dividend duty towards the expenses of Government, and a land tax would not affect them very much. For that reason I welcome an income tax with a land tax. I do not wish to say more, but I agree with Mr. Moss that it is time the Government considered the advisability of re-

ducing the subsidies to municipalities. When the shoe pinches to the extent it does at present, I think the municipalities may well do without the large grants they have been receiving; and as regards roads board grants, it would be hard to cut them off entirely and at once. There can be no doubt a great deal of good is being done by roads boards throughout the State, and it must be admitted that people in country districts are helping themselves to a large extent by local rating, in some districts as much as 2d. in the pound on the unimproved value, and a large amount of money is thus collected in the roads districts. Some of the districts are rated very heavily, and I think it is fair the Government should supplement the amounts collected; but roads boards are not always assisted by the Government as equally and as fairly as they might be. I know one district where special grants were received in one year to the amount of £3,140—a member asks me for the name, but I will not mention it. I am connected with a pretty large roads district, and I find we got £300 in a year from the Government; so I am at a loss to know why the Murray district gets £300, and another district should get over £3,000 from the Government. We in the Murray district are quite as much entitled to be helped liberally, and the money is as well spent in that district as in any other. There is a little favour shown by these special grants. I have not up to the present had time to consider in detail the Bill before us, but I will go into it before the Committee stage. I may say I do not bind myself at present to accept all that is in the Bill. It has been said there is something absolutely illegal in it, and that it ought to be amended. One question is whether 4d. in the pound of income tax is a fair and reasonable amount to impose, or whether the majority of members think it is desirable that the amount should be reduced. I shall use my judgment when the Bill is in Committee on matters of that kind. I hope we shall be able to send the Bill from this House, and that any amendments we make will be acceptable to another place, so that the Government will be able to get the assist-

ance they so much desire. In conclusion I express my approval of the proposals which the Government have brought in for an income tax in connection with a land tax, and I support the second reading.

On motion by the *Hon. C. A. Piesse*, debate adjourned.

DENMARK RAILWAY AND ESTATE PURCHASE.

Motion to approve.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (*Hon. J. D. Connolly*) moved—

That this House approves of the purchase by the Government of the Denmark Railway and Estate at the price of £50,000, and subject to the terms and conditions of a draft agreement submitted to the House.

He said: In asking the House to approve of this motion for the purchase of the Denmark railway and estate at the price of £50,000, on the terms set forth in the draft agreement now before the House, I may inform members, if they are not aware of it, that the draft agreement and plans now on the table show the land proposed to be purchased, and show the railway through the locality. The motion asks the House to approve of the purchase of the railway and lands. The lands consist of about 25,000 acres, and the railway is 30 miles in length. On the estate there are some 70 buildings, consisting of over 40 four-roomed cottages, two churches, halls, a school, and other buildings, all of wood but very substantially built. The Government have approved of the offer which the company finally submitted; and the purchase having already been approved by the other branch of Parliament, the approval of this House is now sought by resolution. Attached to the papers on the table are a valuation made by Mr. William Paterson, the managing director of the Agricultural Bank; also a valuation of the railway made by Mr. Dartnall, Chief Engineer for Existing Lines; a valuation of the land and railway made some 18 months ago by the Minister for Lands, now the Premier; also a valuation of the land

made by the then Director of Agriculture, Mr. Chaplin. The main points in the draft agreement are as follow:—The Government have secured an option from the Millars' Karri & Jarrah Company 1902 Ltd., for the purchase of the Denmark Railway and all lands of the company included within the area served by the railway from Torbay Junction to Denmark, and all other property belonging to the company relating to the railway (except certain scheduled movable plant), at the price of £50,000. The approval of the House is sought to the exercise by the Government of the option in the terms of the draft agreement submitted to the House. The Government under the purchase will obtain the railway and lands as described in the first schedule to the draft agreement, free from all encumbrances; the purchase money being payable to the trustees for the debenture-holders of the company. The option agreement contains the ordinary conditions of sale between vendor and purchaser, with provisions preserving the rights of the company under its concession of 1889 as amended in 1899, in the event of the option not being exercised. To go back a little farther, in 1904 when the Daglish Government were in power, Millars agreed to hand over the railway and concession if the Government would provide an equal mileage of railway and fastenings, and at the same time grant them a timber lease of 100,000 acres near the Warren River at a nominal rent. The idea was to construct the line from somewhere near Karridale in the direction of the Warren. This offer was rightly refused, as it would have meant that for 25,000 acres the Government would have given 100,000 acres of the best karri land in Western Australia at a nominal rental. Towards the end of the year 1905, Mr. Chaplin, the then Director of Agriculture, made an inspection of the Albany district as to its suitability for dairying operations. He also made a valuation in connection with this property, which was considered too high by the Government. He stated in reference to it:—

"The country in this locality, and which may be said to be tapped by the

railway, contains probably some of the best soil in the State, while the climate is all that can be desired for agricultural purposes. A perusal of the attached rainfall return (from 1898 to 1904) gives an adequate idea of what may be considered its extremely favourable moisture. It will be noticed that in the summer months the rainfall is ample, and country such as this should constitute one of the best fields in Australia for the settlement of dairy farmers, orchardists, and general agriculturists. There is permanent water and running streams, and if the country were cut up into blocks from 100 acres to 200 acres there would be room for considerable number of families. While I was at the settlement horses were provided, and in company with a number of the settlers I visited and inspected a large area of the country. In addition to the area held by the company there are about 100,000 acres of first-class Crown land, which it is estimated would be served by the railway, and which could be properly utilised, were the line in the hands of the State."

Then he gives farther details about the land, and goes on to state his valuation of the railway and lands, the total amount of his valuation being £74,895. The figure which the Government now proposes to purchase for is £50,000. Mr. Chaplin valued the property as follows:—18,147 acres of first-class land at £2 per acre, £36,847; 6,145 acres of second-class land at 6s. 8d. per acre, £2,048; 30 miles of railway at £1,000 per mile, £30,000; buildings, £4,000; plant, including locomotive and rolling stock, £2,000, making a total of £74,895.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I notice by the report that the Minister for Lands says that is an over-estimate.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will come to the estimate made by the Minister for Lands directly. I have quoted the extracts that I think will be of interest on this occasion, but the full report is attached to the papers on the table of the House. The Minister for Lands, now the Premier, reported on the property, and made a recommendation

to Cabinet. His report is also attached to the papers. He goes on to say:—

"There can be no doubt as to the productiveness of the soil in this part of the State, and provided the property could be purchased at a reasonable figure I would recommend that the Government acquire it. I cannot agree with the valuation given by either the Director of Agriculture or that submitted by the company, despite the fact that it is a substantial reduction on their previous valuation of £123,650."

That was the price the company asked for it some year ago after Mr. Chaplin's valuation. They offered it at £75,000, Mr. Chaplin's figure. The Minister for Lands in his report continued:—

"I think if this property can be purchased for £50,000 it would be a good deal for the State, but whether the company would accept that or not I am not in a position to say. My estimate is made up as follows:—

25,000 acres at 17s. 6d. per acre	£21,875
Railways	23,200
Buildings	3,000
Plant	2,000

Total £50,075

The last offer that was received from Millars prior to this was £75,000, practically the valuation of the then Director of Agriculture, which offer the Government would not entertain. Eventually Millars offered the property at £50,000 subject to the approval of their London directors, and during the early part of this year Mr. Paterson, the Manager of the Agricultural Bank, inspected the property and reported on it as to the advisability of purchasing. I think hon. members will admit Mr. Paterson is a very safe judge of property, and I think he would be rather conservative in his estimate. So it will be a pretty safe one to follow. His report is also attached to the papers. He speaks in very high terms of the dairying possibilities of the property and then says:—

"Undoubtedly this portion of the property contains some of the very best soil in Western Australia. The climate is all that could be desired for

agronomic purposes, and if wisely handled will become the most valuable area of equal size in this State. The annual rainfall may be put down at 45 inches, therefore sufficient for the needs of settlers who should practise intense culture on this most suitable area. Situated as this land is some 40 miles west of Albany, and near the coast, it is practically free from frosts, consequently there is no risk for the potato grower on this score, and big crops through the year should be relied upon. Onions also should give good returns, for both climate and land are most suitable for their growth. English grasses keep green the year round, which makes it possible for dairying to be engaged in with certainty of profit, and it is in this locality where the best apples are grown, therefore it may be reasonably supposed, if the right class of settler occupies this country they will be prosperous. I had an opportunity of seeing some of the settlers in this locality, and found that all kinds of vegetables, lucerne, rye grass, many clovers, cocksfoot, and paspalum, grow exceptionally well. The fruit trees are remarkable for size and productiveness; therefore, as a whole, the 24,582 acres I inspected would be of good value to this State at 20s. per acre."

Hon. members will notice that Mr. Paterson's valuation is 2s. 6d. per acre more than that of the Minister for Lands. This property has been bought on the basis of 17s. 6d. per acre. Mr. Paterson goes on farther to say:—

"If this land and railway is secured by the State, I would strongly advise limiting the area for one person to 100 acre. There would be a better prospect of the whole area being subdned and brought under cultivation. Therefore I think special effort should be made to secure first-class men to select and every encouragement given financially to enable settlers to put their land to its best use. From this estate in a few years the output of fruit, potatoes, onions, and butter would add materially to the prosperity of Albany, as the port for shipment of

apples must be there, and they could be taken from the cool lands on which they would be grown and shipped within a few hours into cool cambers, without being subject to any climatic changes which would be likely to injure them. Western Australia's greatest want agronomically to-day is suitable summer land for dairying, and here at Denmark it appears to me the summer would be the most prolific season, as the rainfall appears to be certain and sufficient for this most important industry."

Mr. Paterson's valuation of the land comprising the whole area at one pound per acre was £24,882, while he estimated the buildings at £4,500, or a total, apart from the railway, of £29,382. Mr. Dartnall, the Engineer for Existing Lines, was sent by the Commissioner of Railways to make a valuation and he valued the railway at £28,000. Therefore, taking the valuations of these two professional men, Mr. Paterson's for the land and Mr. Dartnall's for the railway, the total valuation is £57,000, or £7,000 more than it is proposed to effect the purchase at.

Hon. J. W. Wright: How much per mile is that for the railway?

Hon. W. Kingsmill: There are 29 miles of railway at £28,000.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To summarise the valuations made, the first was in November, 1905, by the then Director of Agriculture. His valuation was £36,847 for the first-class land £2,000 for the second-class land, £30,000 for the railway, and £6,000 for the plant and buildings, making a total of £74,895. The valuation of the Minister for Lands was £21,875 for the land, £23,200 for the railway (a little over £700 a mile), and £5,000 for the plant and buildings, or a total of £50,075. Mr. Paterson's valuation was £29,000 for the land and plant, while Mr. Dartnall's valuation for the 30 miles of railway was £28,000, or a total for Mr. Paterson's and Mr. Dartnall's valuations of £57,000. I think it is an exceptional opportunity for the country to acquire a first class estate connected by a railway at a very reasonable price. That is how it occurred to

the Government, and I think the Government would be wanting in their duty if they had not at any rate submitted the offer to Parliament and given Parliament an opportunity of saying whether the country should acquire this property or not.

Hon. J. W. Wright: They have come down 30 per cent. in price since Mr. Chaplin made his report.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. G. Randell: Are the company bound?

Hon. M. L. Moss: Yes. In the agreement they are bound subject to the approval of Parliament.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They are bound to sell if Parliament approves.

Hon. G. Randell: What about the approval of the head office in London?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That approval has been given.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I notice something in the agreement about leasing the railway pending the sale.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That came about in this way. Some time ago when they ceased to run the mill they ceased to run the train, and that caused a great deal of inconvenience to the settlers. There are a number of settlers in that neighbourhood. Consequently the Government leased the railway at a peppercorn rental and they are running a train service to-day for the convenience of the settlers. [*Hon. W. Kingsmill:* Twice a fortnight.] This purchase will give the State 25,000 acres of land on which to settle the people, in addition to which it will open up 35,000 acres suitable for settlement. Mr. Brockman, Deputy Surveyor General, reporting on the Crown lands outside this estate said:—

“It appears from the information obtainable from within a 10-mile radius of the Denmark-Torbay Railway there are some 35,000 acres suitable for selection under first-class conditions, including about 3,000 acres in the Torbay Agricultural Area, 10,000 acres of coast dairy land, and some 15,000 acres suitable for cultivation within the freehold land offered to the Government by the Timber Combine,

and the adjoining land between that area and the coast.”

I think it is quite apparent that the State is getting very good value in securing this 25,000 acres of karri land (the timber has been cut off but the stumps remain), together with 30 miles of railway and these 50 or 60 buildings and a certain amount of plant. In addition it will open up for settlement an extra 35,000 acres of land. It is proposed if this land is purchased to cut it up into small blocks of something like one hundred acres. As the reports show, the land is of exceptionally good quality and therefore it is very well adapted with its abundant rainfall for closer settlement. Of course it will be necessary to spend a good deal of money on the land before it is suitable for selection, and probably the policy that will be followed will be to cut it up into 100-acre blocks, and clear 10 acres on each block. It is estimated it will cost about £4 an acre to clear, and payment will be extended over 20 years to the settlers. Although the karri has been cut a number of years and probably it will be easy to burn the stumps; there is a dense hazel scrub that has grown over the land, and that is where the cost of clearing will be greatest. That scrub will have to be cut down and burnt before anything can be done. Then later the stumps can be taken out by the settlers themselves in their own time. If there is any information the House would like I shall be happy to give it; but briefly these are the particulars. The agreement is on the table, together with the reports I have mentioned on the land and the railways; and there will be farther reports laid on the table in a day or so in connection with the motion moved by Mr. Drew to-night.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-West): I have much pleasure in seconding this resolution. I have had the pleasure of travelling over the land and I spent several days on it. I have travelled pretty well throughout Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, and I have never seen better country than that embraced in this concession which the

Government desire to purchase. The soil is beautiful. In bringing in the huge karri poles down the hill sides, the land has been torn up to a depth of four or five or six feet, and one can see the beautiful rich soil there. Mr. Throssell was there on one occasion with me and he witnessed the exposure of the soil. One has only to notice the marvellous growth there to see what great body the land possesses. Independent of the good land there, and the railway that the State will acquire, there is a very nice township with numerous roads which will be feeders to the railway line. These roads have been made by small branch lines of railway having been run out from the main line and the rails and sleepers have been taken up, making a very good road. These roads extend in some instances seven or eight miles and they will play an important part indeed in settling this land. They will answer the purpose of roads, and there are really good bridges, and altogether it strikes me as a splendid opportunity of enabling people who purchase the land to get their goods backwards and forwards to the railway. One can get along those roads with the greatest of ease; they are perfectly level. That is a point which must not be lost sight of.

Hon. R. F. Sholl: There is 40 inches of rain.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: That does not matter. It is a beautiful class of land and no doubt the State will lose a great opportunity which will never recur if we do not purchase the land and the railway at the present time. The proposition is good enough for any private person to take up, and had it not been for the persistence of the Government in pushing forward the proposal to-day, we should never have it offered on such terms again.

Hon. R. F. Sholl: It is brought in before the land tax comes on.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: That may have something to do with it, but the fact remains that here is a beautiful piece of country which has long waited development. It has been in the hands of this company for a long time, and the value

of the land has been estimated three or four times what it is to-day. The company would never sell the land under five pounds per acre. I trust this motion will pass. I want to refer to the stumps which have been left in the ground. They will be easily burnt out because there is any amount of dead wood and top timber which is easily handled and which can be utilised for burning out the stumps.

Hon. R. F. Sholl: The country is too wet.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: It is not by any means wet country. It is on the flats where you get the wet, but that is neither here nor there. The country is well defined, the slopes are very nice and there is a little township. One point must not be lost sight of, that this is right in the line of one of the two routes suggested for a railway eventually to be carried to Bridgetown, and it is spoken of as the favoured one. The other route is from Mt. Barker. A railway must eventually go to Denmark to open up the land beyond. This beautiful rich land around Denmark does not represent the limit of the area of good land along the coast in that vicinity and in purchasing the line we shall be able to open up some 30,000 acres of Government land and altogether create a settlement which we shall not get while the other lands and the railway remain in the hands of the present holders. I do not know that it is necessary to labour this question. I have said before the proposition is a good one and if it is good enough for private enterprise it is good enough for the Government. I hope the opportunity which exists now will not be lost sight of, otherwise we shall find ourselves in the same position as we are in with regard to the Midland Company's lands, setting back an important part of the country because we did not give the value which it was worth. I have much pleasure in seconding the motion.

Hon. G. THROSSELL (East): I happen to know something about this country. I believe this will be an excellent bargain for the State. The land will

be heavy to clear to get rid of the enormous stumps, but once they are got rid of the land will be rapidly taken up and it is suitable for close settlement. Many years ago, when Commissioner of Crown Lands, I visited this portion of the country and was highly interested in it. I have reason to believe that the sale of the land will recoup the whole of the cost and we shall have the railway thrown in. This is a part of the country that has had very little indeed done for it, owing chiefly to its not possessing large areas of land fit for settlement. The acquiring of this concession will wipe out this disqualification, and do a great deal of good for Albany. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion. Although I do not know as much as some members about it, I have studied the question and I believe it is an excellent bargain for the country to acquire the land and the railway for £50,000.

On motion by the *Hon. W. Patrick*, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9.54 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 5th December, 1907.

	PAGE
Questions: Natives Ill-treated, Mr. Blake's Statements	1319
Railway Sparks, Collie Coal	1319
Greenhills-Quairading Railway	1320
Mining Regulations, Greenbushes	1320
Bills: District Fire Brigades, 2a. concluded	1320
Fremantle Graving Dock, 2a. concluded, Com. reported	1325
Bunbury Harbour Trust, 2a. moved	1359
Estimates resumed: Public Works—Road and Bridges vote, progress	1362

The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

QUESTION—NATIVES ILL-TREATED, MR. BLAKE'S STATEMENTS.

As to Mr. Canning's Exploration.

Mr. **TROY**, without notice, asked the Minister for Mines: Has his attention been drawn to the statements in to-day's *Morning Herald* with regard to the alleged ill-treatment of blacks by the Canning Exploration Expedition?

The **PREMIER**: I may reply that my attention has been drawn to the statements, and the leader of the expedition, Mr. Canning, has quite recently reported on the matter, his report being absolutely at variance with the statements made in the *Morning Herald* by Mr. Blake, who was cook to the party. Full particulars will be given to hon. members as soon as Mr. Canning has had an opportunity of replying to the newspaper statements.

QUESTION—RAILWAY SPARKS, COLLIE COAL.

Mr. **STONE** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that several fires have taken place in the Greenough and Irwin districts within a few days, caused by sparks from the locomotives using Collie coal? 2, Will he take steps to prevent the use of Collie coal by railway locomotives during December, January, and February? 3, Is he aware of the decision of the Federal High Court delivered last month, declaring the Railway Department not liable for damages caused by sparks from those engines? 4, If so, what means do the Government propose to protect farmers and others from loss caused by the Railway Department?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: 1, Not officially, but I have been so advised privately. 2, Collie coal is not used on the Government railway locomotives in the agricultural districts during December, January, and February. 3, Yes. 4, By using the best coal procurable in the agricultural districts; the most suitable spark arresters; and arranging for effective fire-breaks.