

He had no hesitation whatever in giving a pledge on behalf of the Government not to interfere with existing registrations. That was simply leaving the law as we found it.

The Hon. H. C. DANGAR: More's the pity!

The Hon. J. HUGHES said that if we began to interfere with the existing law, the hon. member would see where we should get. These things were done many years ago; they were not being done today. It was only people who were entitled to come in in 1900 who came in. They could not come in now, but they were in, and it was proposed to leave them alone. Hon. members were aware that when the medical profession was put under regulation in the same way, a good many gentlemen who had not the degree, and who could not have obtained it, were allowed to come in.

The Hon. Dr. NASH: Only a few!

The Hon. J. HUGHES: Only a few, but they were recognised.

Clause agreed to.

Preamble and title agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; report adopted.

Bill read the third time.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 14 December, 1909.

Assent to Bills — Papers — Questions without Notice —
Defamation (Amendment) Bill — Closer Settlement
(North Logan Estate) — Defamation (Amendment) Bill
— Closer Settlement (Amendment) Bill — Sewerage
Scheme for Vaucluse — North Botany and Botany
Sewerage — Wagga Wagga Sewerage Scheme — Man-
ning River Harbour Works — Grafton and South
Grafton Water Supply — Junece Water Supply Scheme
— Leichhardt to Homebush Electric Tramway — Darley-
road, Randwick, to Little Coogee Tramway — Glenreagh
to Dorriggo Railway — Richmond to Kurrajong Railway
— Subway from Moore-street, Sydney, to Lavender
Bay — Muswellbrook to Merriwa Railway — Flemington-
Belmore-Glebe Island Railway — Borellan towards
Hillston Railway — Aborigines Protection Bill (second
reading) — Fisheries (Amendment) Bill (second reading)
— Paddington Streets Extension Bill — Adjournment
(Train Services — Suspension of Labour Conditions).

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Royal assent to the following bills reported:—

Seat of Government Surrender Bill.
Trustees of Show-grounds Enabling Bill.
Railways Crossings Bill.
Loan Bill.

PAPERS.

Ministers laid upon the table the following papers, which were referred to the Printing Committee:—

Notification of appropriation of land, under the Public Works Act, 1900, for the maintenance of traffic on the Great Southern railway at Henty.

Evidence taken at the inquiry held by the Public Service Board, respecting certain complaints made by employees of the Nautical School-ship *Sobraon*, as to the conditions of employment.

Notification of resumption of land, under the Public Works Act, 1900, in connection with the construction of the railway from Gloucester to Taree.

Notification of resumption of land, under the Public Works Act, 1900, in connection with the construction of the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney railway.

Notification of resumption of land, under the Public Works Act, 1900, in connection with the construction of the railway from Maitland to Dungog.

Notification of resumption of land, under the Public Works Act, 1900, in connection with the disposal of sewage from the western, southern, Illawarra, and Botany districts.

Regulations under the Pure Food Act, 1908.

TORONTO BRANCH LINE.

Mr. CHARLTON: I desire to ask the Premier a question without notice. In view of the great inconvenience to the travelling public of the Newcastle and Maitland districts owing to the absence of the usual facilities afforded by the Toronto branch line, and the promise that the hon. gentleman gave to the deputation to take into consideration the question of the Government taking over the line, has he come to any conclusion in regard to the matter?

Mr. WADE: In compliance with the promise I made to a deputation some six or eight weeks ago, a further report was called for to ascertain whether it was practically and financially feasible to reopen this line to Toronto. That report, I think, has just come in. It has not been dealt with, but in view of the

serious crisis now overshadowing us, when a desire to secure work and coal for industrial purposes is paramount, this is not the time to discuss such things as pleasure resorts.

**CHIEF RAILWAY COMMISSIONER :
MINERS' MINES.**

Mr. ARTHUR GRIFFITH: I desire, now that the Premier is back in the House, to ask him a question which I asked his colleague, the Treasurer, the other day, namely, whether the Commissioners for Railways, in appropriating or commandeering the coal put out by the mines known as the miners' mines at Newcastle were acting under definite Executive sanction, or whether, as common carriers, they were merely illegally misappropriating goods that were placed in their hands for transit?

Mr. WADE: Any action taken by the Chief Railway Commissioner under the Government Railways Act was taken under the powers conferred upon him under that act, and were in accordance with the law. The Government have taken further action warranted by the emergency of the present position, to obtain coal for the public services at a price which will not leave the public at the mercy of any combination to enhance prices.

Mr. ARTHUR GRIFFITH: I am not quite sure whether the Minister desires me to understand that he maintains that there is power in the Railways Act enabling the Railway Commissioners, without Executive sanction, to appropriate goods that come to them for transit?

Mr. WADE: I made no such suggestion.

Mr. ARTHUR GRIFFITH: The hon. gentleman inferred it!

FOOD RELIEF WORK.

Mr. HOLLIS: I desire to ask the Secretary for Public Works if he will kindly tell the House who authorised the food relief work under the Labour Bureau, and further, whether it is his opinion that that relief is adequate for large families?

Mr. C. A. LEE: I have been informed by the Director of the Labour Bureau that it was ample, and met the case in

[*Mr. Wade.*]

every way. The report is a very definite one, and I have never yet heard from the director anything to the contrary.

CARRIAGE OF COAL AND SLACK.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: I desire to ask the Secretary for Public Works if it is a fact that the Railway Commissioners issued a general regulation forbidding the use of trucks for the carrying of coal or coal slack, and has it come to his notice that they have refused to carry 6 tons of slack from Kogarah to Darling Harbour, although special application was put in to the commissioner requesting him to do so; and, if so, why was that refusal made?

Mr. WADDELL: I am not aware that any change has been made in the regulations in regard to the carriage of coal and slack. In reference to the other matter, I would suggest that the hon. member should give notice of his question.

REFUSAL BY THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER TO CARRY COAL.

Mr. ARTHUR GRIFFITH: I should like to ask the Minister for Railways whether the action of the Chief Commissioner, some weeks ago, in refusing to carry coal for persons desirous of sending it to market, was taken by the Chief Commissioner on his own responsibility, or under instructions from the Government; and, if the latter, I wish to know why the Chief Commissioner is allowed to carry the odium, if it were really the action of the Government?

Mr. WADDELL: I think the hon. gentleman, asking a question of that kind, might give notice of it.

**TIMBER AND GRAVEL ALONG THE
RAILWAY LINE.**

Mr. CHARLTON: I should like to ask the Minister for Railways whether it is a fact that the Chief Commissioner has refused to move timber from the different stations along the line between Gosford and Newcastle, and also to remove gravel from the gravel pit, notwithstanding the fact that the material is badly wanted by the shires and municipalities; and if there is sufficient coal available from the mines working, will the Minister request the Chief Com-

missioner, in order to prevent a great number of men from being thrown out of employment unnecessarily, to remove the timber from the different stations, and also the gravel from the quarry at Teralba?

Mr. WADDELL: In regard to these matters brought under my notice, I will speak to the Chief Commissioner at the first opportunity. I am sure he has no desire to create more hardship than he can possibly help in the arrangements he is compelled to make.

RAILWAY CONCESSIONS TO SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Mr. LYNCH: I wish to ask the Minister for Railways if it is a fact that the Chief Commissioner has abolished the concessions ordinarily granted to school children travelling on the railways during the vacation?

Mr. WADDELL: I have not had any official information that any particular decision has been come to on that matter. I think it likely that in the case of children going home from school—children who have been away a considerable distance from home, and who are returning by train to spend their holidays at home—it is the intention of the Chief Commissioner to give them the usual concession; but I think it quite possible that other concessions may be taken away. If the hon. member will remind me of the matter to-morrow, I shall perhaps be able to give him the information.

Later,

Mr. LYNCH: I desire to ask the Colonial Treasurer if he is aware that the Railway Commissioners declared that it was not their intention to raise fares on the railways, and how he can reconcile that statement with the fact that school children are denied the privileges usually enjoyed by them, and are being forced to pay full fares?

Mr. FITZPATRICK: Only when they are not going home!

Mr. LYNCH: In every case.

Mr. WADDELL: The commissioners have made no proposal to raise fares in the ordinary sense of the term, but the commissioners do not see their way clear, in view of the unfortunate state of things brought about by the strike, to

give children all the concessions which they have hitherto got during their holidays.

Mr. HOLLIS: I desire to ask the Colonial Treasurer whether those concessions to school children are not a portion of regulations approved of by the Government, and whether the Government have approved of a by-law repealing those regulations?

Mr. WADDELL: The Government have not approved of any by-law repealing those regulations, if there are such regulations. It is impossible for me to carry all these items of information in my memory, but if the hon. gentleman will communicate with me in writing I shall be glad to get him accurate information.

COAL-MINERS' STRIKE.

Mr. MCGOWEN: I should like to ask the Premier a question: Is it his intention to make a Ministerial statement to-night, or any night this week, with regard to the intentions of the Government in the present industrial crisis? I do not want him to make it so that I cannot say a few words afterwards.

Mr. WADE: I do not propose to make a Ministerial statement to-day. We have had sufficient for the day.

Later,

Mr. EDDEN: I wish to ask the Premier if he does not think that at this stage, instead of talking about Irvine's act and Irish coercion —

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must ask a question.

Mr. EDDEN: I am asking a question.

Mr. SPEAKER: No; the hon. member is making a statement.

Mr. EDDEN: I simply wish to ask the Premier if, instead of considering bills of that character, it would not be better for him to consider the position, and the speech he made in this House when this trouble commenced? Does he not think it would be far better now if he withdrew the statement that he made, which the proprietors took up immediately, that the men must go back to work before there is a conference? He should just waive that, and ask these coal-proprietors to waive it, and meet these men in conference without these restrictions.

Mr. WADE: It has never been questioned that the men did strike, and to ask the Government or the public to consent for a moment to men who have broken the law being allowed to secure redress for grievances whilst they are in contempt of the law cannot be tolerated. The proper course to adopt is the course that the Government have held out on previous occasions. There is a tribunal to redress grievances, and the men should be loyal to the law of the land, return to work without delay, and they will receive those benefits that the law holds out to them.

Mr. EDDEN: We all regret the unfortunate position, but the hon. gentleman knows that through the engine-drivers being off and so forth, even if the men said to-morrow, "We will go to work," it will be weeks before they can get to work.

Mr. WADE: If the hon. member can secure a response to-morrow morning from the body of miners that they will go back to work forthwith, I will undertake to use the utmost powers of the Government to see that work is started on Monday next.

Mr. DACEY: I desire to ask the Premier whether he will take the House into his confidence as to what action he intends to take with reference to this strike?

Mr. WADE: The House will not rise to-night, and I am not prepared to make any statement to-night. There will be ample time to deal with all developments before the House rises.

Mr. ARTHUR GRIFFITH: I desire to ask the Premier, with regard to his reference to Irvine's coercion act and the Irish Coercion Act, if he cannot find in either of those measures provision to meet his views respecting the present difficulty, does he not think that he could obtain matter that would be satisfactory to him from some edicts of the Czar of Russia?

CASE OF BARTLETT.

Mr. FITZPATRICK: I wish to ask the Secretary for Public Works whether he has had brought under his notice the matter which I referred to last week—that is, the case of a man named Bartlett, who was sentenced to a month's imprisonment?

Mr. C. A. LEE: I cannot give an answer now.

Mr. FITZPATRICK: Will the hon. member be able to say something about it to-morrow?

Mr. C. A. LEE: Yes.

RESTORATION OF RAILWAY SERVICES.

Mr. CLARK: I wish to ask is the statement correct that the Railway Commissioners are prepared to restore the railway services almost at once, and that they have sufficient coal to restore them? Is it the intention of the Railway Commissioners to restore the ordinary services without any further delay?

Mr. HOLLIS: On the same question, I wish to ask the Minister for Railways whether he has made any inquiries as to the allegations I made twice last week that the Railway Commissioners were increasing their stock of coal, and that there was no necessity whatever to reduce the services?

Mr. CLARK: I also wish to ask, is the Minister for Railways prepared to adopt the suggestion of Mr. W. M. Hughes, that if the Railway Commissioners have surplus coal, they will distribute it among the gas companies, not only the Sydney Gas Company, but the North Sydney Gas Company, so that the people will not be without light?

Mr. WADDELL: As to when the railway services will be fully restored, I am not in a position to make any definite statement. With regard to the other matter, it would be just as well to submit it to me in writing.

Mr. HOLLIS: What about the allegations I made as to the stock of coal—that the commissioners were increasing their stock?

Mr. WADDELL: I do not know what allegations the hon. member made.

Mr. MCGOWEN: That they have more coal now than ever they had!

Mr. WADDELL: I can give this information: that during the last two or three days of last week the stock in hand was not diminished—that is, that the coal that was being received was practically sufficient to run the railways during the last two or three days of last week. Consequently the supply on hand was not diminished.

STRIKE SUPPRESSION BILL.

Mr. DACEY: I wish to ask the Premier whether his attention has been drawn to the information furnished by the *Sydney Morning Herald* to-day—that it is the intention of the Premier to introduce a strike suppression bill to the Assembly? I would like the hon. member to inform the House what truth there is in the report?

Mr. WADE: The Government have been considering, not only the necessity, but the most practical method and effectual manner of asserting the supremacy of the law; but I may say this: that we have not considered the question of either what is called Mr. Irvine's act, or the Irish Coercion Act. As a matter of fact, the first acquaintance I have had with Mr. Irvine's act was made this afternoon, in consequence of some questions put to me by members of the public; but I would like to say, as this question is cognate to the existence of a body called the strike congress, at present in Sydney, that that body has been constituted, apparently, for the purpose of controlling, regulating, and giving assistance to the strike of coal-miners in progress in the northern, southern, and western districts. Although the public may give, and the members themselves may claim, some credit for having defeated an attempt to extend the strike, and whilst they may, and I am not going to pass any comment upon it, claim credit for having defeated revolutionary attempts to make the strike more widespread and more devastating, we cannot lose sight of the fact that at the present time that body are controlling and preventing the settlement of a strike in a smaller area which is equally devastating, although, perhaps, more prolonged and lingering in its effects.

Mr. EDDEN: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but will he kindly explain how they are doing what he has stated?

Mr. WADE: The hon. member is a thought-reader. I am just going to do that. This body have asked various unions to intrust the question of striking or not striking to them, and they have secured the assent of various unions, who have not yet struck, to the question being left to this congress. On the other hand, the miners in the south and

west of New South Wales have declared that they will return to work if the strike congress will only say the word, and they have therefore reposed in this body the power to terminate this strike whenever they think fit so to do. We cannot lose sight of the fact, from the public statements made by members of the congress, that in them has been reposed the responsibility, if they think fit, of bringing about a termination of this strike; and I say that, in view of the whole spirit of legislation in the present day, the position is clearly anomalous, and should not be allowed to continue.

NARRANDERA TO FINLEY RAILWAY SERVICE.

Mr. PETERS: I desire to ask the Minister for Railways, in view of the report that the Railway Commissioners have a sufficiency of coal just now, whether he will bring this matter specially under their consideration: we have only one railway serving the main portion of Riverina—that is, from Narrandera to Finley—and will he take steps to place that service on the old footing?

Mr. WADDELL: I may say at once that if making the change indicated by the hon. member involves the consumption of more coal, I do not think it is at all likely that the commissioners will agree to it. If the hon. member likes to ask the question to-morrow, I will put it before the Chief Commissioner.

CONSUMPTION OF COAL BY RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

Mr. STUART-ROBERTSON: I wish to ask the Minister for Railways if he can inform the House what quantity of coal is at present in the hands of the Railway Commissioners, and what quantity of coal is used per week when the full train and tramway services are conducted?

Mr. WADDELL: If the hon. member will give notice of that question, I will be very happy to obtain the information.

INDIAN EMIGRATION TO NEW SOUTH WALES.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: I desire to ask the Premier if his attention has been drawn to very serious misstatements appearing in the Indian press with regard to immigration conditions, land

settlement conditions, and rates of wages obtaining in New South Wales; if his attention has been further drawn to the fact that coloured people have been induced by those misrepresentations to leave India for Sydney, and that some of those coloured people are now at Colombo in a destitute condition? Do the Government propose taking any steps to rectify the misrepresentations that are being made in the Indian press?

Mr. WADE: I can only repeat what has been said by me in this House over and over again—that the Government are holding out no inducements to people in India to emigrate to New South Wales. There are certain agencies of a private character which are holding out inducements, I believe, and making arrangements for bringing people out here. Over those actions we have no control. So far as the Government are concerned, they have not held out any inducements, directly or indirectly, for emigration from India to New South Wales.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: Do the Government propose to take steps to rectify the misrepresentations that are being made in India?

Mr. WADE: Any misrepresentations, whether in India or elsewhere, will, without delay, be rectified.

DEFAMATION (AMENDMENT) BILL.

In Committee (consideration of Legislative Council's amendments):

Mr. WADE (Gordon), Premier and Attorney-General [5.6], said he proposed to ask the Committee to accept the amendments made by the Legislative Council, with certain verbal alterations, to make the meaning of Parliament more clear. The first amendment was in clause 5 subclause (b). That simply removed the final words from subclause (a), and put them in a new subclause by themselves. But, as the words stood, they were not grammatical, and he proposed to amend that by putting in the words "a fair and accurate report of the proceedings." Then the subclause would read, "a fair and accurate report of the proceedings of any committee of any such House." The next amendment made by the Legislative Council was in what was now marked subclause (d), to which they

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had added a proviso. The intention was to provide that matters of defamation not tendered in evidence before the court trying the case should not be published by a newspaper. It required therefore a few words to be inserted to make it clear that that referred to the court trying the case, and he proposed to amend the amendment by inserting at the end of the proviso, and after the word "proceedings" the words "of such court." This case might arise: A court of first instance, say a jury court, trying a case might exclude inadmissible evidence, and the newspapers could not publish that evidence so tendered and excluded, if defamatory. But the party who had suffered in the lower court had the right to appeal to the Court of Appeal, and we could not prohibit the proceedings of the Court of Appeal from being published in the ordinary way as proceedings of a court of justice—that was, to prevent the defamatory statement excluded in the lower court from being published by the newspapers. The next amendment was in the last paragraph but one of the same clause, and was, he thought, a clerical error through an alteration of the paragraph, made in the course of the bill going through Committee. The intention of the Legislative Council really was to make the retraction or explanation apply to the last three paragraphs of the section—that was, paragraphs (f), (g), and (h), as they were now numbered, or (e), (f), and (g), as they were when the bill left this Chamber. But the other House had introduced the old numbering (e), (f), and (g). So it was desirable to omit (e) and insert (h) after (g). The last amendment was a new subclause, which was only a reproduction in another, and perhaps a clearer, form of clause 11. That clause had been struck out, and its substance had been placed in a more appropriate spot, as dealing with actions against newspapers, and providing for certain pleas being pleaded without the necessity of applying to a judge for permission to do so.

Motions (by Mr. WADE) agreed to:

That the Legislative Council's amendment of paragraph (a) of clause 5, omitting the words "of any committee of any such House," be agreed to.

That the Legislative Council's amendment inserting in clause 5 the words "(b) of any committee of any such House," be amended by inserting the words "a fair and accurate report of the proceedings" after the word "committee."

That the Legislative Council's amendment in paragraph (e), clause 5, be amended by inserting after "proceedings" the words "of such court."

That the Legislative Council's amendment in clause 5, omitting the words "paragraph (g)" be agreed to; that the Legislative Council's amendment in the same clause, inserting the words "paragraphs (b), (e), (f), and (g)," be amended by omitting the letter "(e)" and the word "and," and inserting after "(g)" the words "and (h)"; that the Council's amendment in the same clause, inserting new paragraph 2, be agreed to; that the Council's amendment omitting clause 11 be agreed to.

Reported that the Committee had amended some and agreed to the remainder of the Legislative Council's amendments; report adopted.

CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

NORTH LOGAN ESTATE.

Mr. MOORE (Bingara), Secretary for Lands [5.15], rose to move:

That, pursuant and subject to the provisions of the Closer Settlement (Amendment) Act, 1907, this House approves of the Governor resuming an area of 11,511 acres, more or less, of private land situate near Cowra, being part of the North Logan estate, within the 15-mile limit of the approved line of railway from Cowra to Canowindra, included within an area covered by a proclamation of intended acquisition, published in the *Government Gazette* of 5th May, 1909, together with any improvements thereon.

He said: The preliminary steps towards the acquisition of this estate were first taken under the ordinary resumption provisions of the law; but subsequently, in view of the passing of the act authorising the construction of the railway from Cowra to Canowindra, which intersects the property, further action was taken, in order that the provisions of section 5 of the Closer Settlement Amendment Act of 1907 might be made applicable to the area to be resumed. Particulars of the various steps taken, and of the disposition of part of the area first covered by proclamation, and of the area finally decided to be resumed, will be found in

the printed papers. The part of the estate proposed to be acquired, embracing an area of 11,500 acres, more or less, is situated from 7 to 16 miles from Cowra railway-station, and is intersected by the proposed railway line from Cowra to Canowindra, Cowra being about 224 miles from Sydney. It will therefore be seen that the land is very favourably situated as regards railway communication. There are about 11,000 acres of agricultural land—that is, about 95 per cent.—and about 500 acres of land suitable for grazing only. The staple product will be wheat, the average crop being estimated at 14 bushels to the acre. The land is suitable for mixed farming, and the cultivation of oats, maize, and barley. The country is at present badly infested with rabbits; but when they are destroyed, and the land fully improved—I need scarcely say it is easier to deal with rabbits under closer settlement conditions—it will have a carrying capacity of one and a half sheep to the acre in any average season. There is no natural surface water supply, but on a portion of the estate an abundant supply can be obtained at a depth of about 40 feet by sinking, and there are good catchments for tanks or dams; but in places the soil is not retentive, and puddle trenches are necessary. There is a permanent water supply from the Lachlan River. Irrigation is not practicable. The average rainfall is about 25½ inches. The area may be suitably subdivided into about thirty-two farms, ranging from 220 to 610 acres, the average being about 360 acres. I should like to draw the attention of hon. members to paragraph 12 in the board's report of the 14th August last, page 5 of the printed papers, in which they say that, in their opinion:

Subdivision into farms of these sizes would be popular amongst a number of intending settlers who have insufficient means to take up large areas and who, unless special provision be made for them, would be debarred from acquiring any land at all.

They go on to say:

At the same time we do not contend that a man with an average family could by grazing, and the cultivation of cereals, live entirely from the proceeds of one of the smaller blocks.

Mr. MACDONELL: Why, then, cut them into smaller blocks when they are insufficient for a man to earn a livelihood?

Mr. MOORE: We are constantly being asked by those who represent men who are not able to take the larger areas, but who would be very glad to get the smaller areas, and make a living partly from this land and partly by engaging in other occupations, and that is a policy —

Mr. MACDONELL: I am against that kind of thing every time!

Mr. MOORE: We are doing it to a small extent, and so far it is proving very satisfactory. The board goes on to say:

But that owing to the satisfactory rainfall and the fact that the land is centrally situated in a populous district, the acquisition of a small farm would be a great assistance to a man of limited means, as it would afford a home for his family, and his spare time could be utilised in outside work to supplement his income.

It is all very well to try to disparage this class of holding, but as a matter of fact there are, I suppose, thousands of holdings in New South Wales to-day —and country members can bear me out —the owners of which, in certain seasons of the year, go out to do various kinds of bush work.

Mr. MILLARD: It is a good type of holding!

Mr. MOORE: Yes. If you give men these smaller areas, the farm may go a long way towards providing a living, and at the same time the holder, in particular seasons, can go out shearing, fencing, harvesting, and doing various kinds of bush work, and altogether make a good living.

Mr. NIELSEN: They often cut down the wages of other men who have to depend upon the labour market. The "scab" shearers have often been drawn from that class!

Mr. MILLARD: It is a libel on those men!

Mr. MOORE: I am sorry the hon. member has introduced this element. I do not see that the case should be as he says. I know that applications are continually made to me with regard to Crown lands and closer settlement lands

[Mr. Moore.

by members, who are styled labour members, to provide small areas and homes for bush workers. Even amongst the hon. member's colleagues he will find men who will support the views I am expressing.

Mr. NIELSEN: Then they have not had the same bitter experience that I have had!

Mr. MOORE: I am sorry that the hon. member's experience has been bitter, but there is no necessity for that being the case. In the Peel River estate we set aside small holdings of this kind.

Mr. NIELSEN: Those were suburban blocks!

Mr. MOORE: These are more or less of that character. There are men in the community who are not able to acquire one of the larger holdings, and we only provide these small holdings to a limited extent. I admit they must be kept within reasonable bounds. The board has been careful to say that they do not contend that every one of these small holdings will be a full home-maintenance area. The tendency is, as methods of production improve, that what are living areas to-day will become more than living areas in the future. The hon. member for Redfern has taken up that attitude, and I agree with him. It is a good sign, because it shows that the methods of production are continually improving. I do not want to cut up land in areas that will in time exceed home-maintenance areas; but my consolation is that, in most cases, men are rearing families on those holdings, and the needs of their children will have to be met.

Mr. McGOWEN: Has this property changed hands since it was reported upon?

Mr. MOORE: I am not aware of that.

Mr. McGOWEN: I have heard a rumour of that kind!

Mr. MOORE: I have not heard a word about it. The board value the part of the estate for resumption, including all improvements, but excluding the railway enhancement, at £5 per acre for 1,222½ acres, and £4 6s. 6d. per acre for 10,288½ acres (£50,610 1s. 10½d. in all). The values, with the increment due to the railway, are £5 15s. and £5 per acre respectively. The next paragraph refers to the valuation for land-tax purposes,

and I am sorry to say that that paragraph is very misleading. I exercise very careful supervision over these statements, but this paragraph escaped my notice before it was printed. It says:

The area proposed to be acquired was valued (unimproved) for land-tax purposes as parts of two areas of 13,936 acres (£1 17s. 2d. per acre), and 9,825½ acres (£1 19s. 3d. per acre). The shire valuations (improved) work out at about £2 19s. 8d. for 1,222½ acres, and £3 6s. for the 10,288½ acres.

As a matter of fact, that is simply taken on an average. There is no real justification for that, because these areas form part of two areas of 13,900 acres and 9,800 acres, or a little over 23,000 acres. We are only resuming 11,500 acres, or less than half. The values vary a good deal over the whole estate. Part of it might be worth £7 an acre, while other parts might only be worth £2 or £3 an acre.

Mr. McGOWEN: But that covers all the land you are purchasing!

Mr. MOORE: As I have explained, we take the land most suitable for closer settlement purposes. Broadly speaking, that is the most valuable land. I am sorry the paragraph appears in this form, which is very misleading. I need hardly say that these valuations, which have been adopted by the shire councils, were the values based on the old land-tax. The shires had to get their machinery to work quickly; but as time goes on they revise these values.

Mr. PETERS: Is the reason for the Government not resuming the whole property the fact that the balance is unsuitable?

Mr. MOORE: I do not say the balance is unsuitable; but we are taking the best of it, and what we think will be the most suitable area for closer settlement.

The improvements, inclusive of ring-barking and scrubbing, which have not been separately valued are valued at £2,099 5s. 6d. They consist of fencing, clearing, tanks, dams, &c., all good useful improvements, and will be valuable to incoming settlers.

The board could not arrive at any amicable settlement as to the price of the estate. The owners were originally offered by the board £5 10s. and £4 15s. per acre for the two areas proposed to be acquired. These values included an amount for railway enhancement. The owners

refused to entertain this offer at the time; but, since the old notices of intending acquisition were superseded by others enabling the Crown to acquire the estate, exclusive of the railway enhancement, they have intimated their willingness to accept those prices, which, however, are 10s and 8s. 6d. per acre, respectively, over the board's later valuations, exclusive of railway enhancement.

Mr. McGOWEN: Does that mean that you are going to give them the value of the enhancement?

Mr. MOORE: It means that we are not going to do so.

Mr. MACDONELL: You are giving 10s. an acre more than the board recommended!

Mr. MOORE: No; it is the other way about. We have deducted the estimated railway enhancement. That was the price which we offered the owners, and which they would not accept. There is one fact that it is only fair I should inform the House of, because the House may decide not to resume this estate. The owners have offered to subdivide the estate, and they have submitted proposals which are not at all unreasonable; but I take it I am bound, in view of the fact that a railway is being built, which enhances the value of the land by about 15s. an acre, to propose the resumption of the estate. The board's estimate of 15s. an acre is, I think, under the mark, because I hold that a railway enhances the value of land by more than £1 an acre. We propose to resume the land at a price which excludes the value given by the railway; otherwise it would be a suitable proposal for the owners to subdivide the estate under agreement with the Crown.

Mr. McGOWEN: Into what sized blocks do the owners propose to cut up the estate?

Mr. MOORE: What they suggest is, that no one should purchase more than £4,000 worth of land. That is to include the value of any land owned by any applicant at present. The terms are also given, but I need not go into them. I mention this because the House might decide to give the owners an opportunity of subdividing. I feel bound, however, to propose that we should resume the land, and that the state should get the benefit of the enhanced value given by the railway. It is suitable for closer settlement,

and if Parliament approves of the resumption we will be able to establish a successful closer settlement area.

Mr. PETERS: If the House is in favour of subdivision by the owners, we should have full plans and particulars as to the proposed subdivision!

Mr. MOORE: I do not ask the House to approve of private subdivision. I ask the House to approve of resumption. If I thought that, in the public interests, we should allow the owners to subdivide, I would take up a different attitude. I ask the House to approve of resumption by the Crown.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: Is there not a great discrepancy between the shire valuation and the price at which the Crown proposes to resume?

Mr. MOORE: I have already explained that the valuation given in the board's report is misleading, because it includes the whole area of about 23,000 acres, while we are only resuming 11,500 acres. The total area which that valuation covers is over 23,000 acres.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: That is for land-tax purposes. The shire valuations (improved value) are stated to work out at about £2 19s. 8d. for 1,222½ acres, and £3 6s. for 10,288½ acres!

Mr. MOORE: I have explained that that is very misleading. It has been inadvertently worked out in that way, but it is only on the average. I am sorry that that misleading paragraph appears.

Mr. MCGOWEN: The Government will have to go to the Appeal Court!

Mr. MOORE: Yes. We cannot agree with the owners, and we shall have to go to the Appeal Court, and we shall have the satisfaction of going there under the new law. This will be the first case under the new law. I should like to give some information with regard to the wheat returns. This land is situated just about the centre of wheat districts 129, 130, and 131. For the five years from 1895 to 1899 the average area under wheat in those three districts was 43,969 acres; for the five years from 1900 to 1904 the average area under wheat was 74,295 acres; and for the five years from 1904 to 1909 the area was 86,721 acres. So that it will be seen that wheat production is advancing in those districts. The average yield for those fifteen years was just within

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a fraction of 11 bushels per acre, and must be regarded as very satisfactory, seeing that that period included the drought years.

AN HON. MEMBER: Any returns as regards lucerne?

Mr. MOORE: I did not get those, because wheat will be the staple product. I daresay that those figures would be interesting, because some of the land is suitable for lucerne-growing.

Question proposed.

Mr. MACDONELL (Cobar) [5.44]: I regard this proposal as very unsatisfactory. I am strongly opposed to the idea of securing lands at apparently high prices, and cutting them up into areas which will not permit people to make a decent living off them, so that they are forced to supplement their earnings by other work. I do not mean to say that I am opposed to anyone who has taken up a block of land getting work elsewhere at the outset until his land is in a sufficiently developed condition to allow him to make a decent living upon it; but it is a mistaken policy to cut up land into such small blocks as will not allow of people making a decent living off their holdings after they have had a reasonable chance of properly developing them. One of the curses of land settlement up to the present has been that land, especially land held under settlement lease, has been cut up by officers of the Lands Department who really did not know the value of it, and who have had too exalted an idea as to what could be done with the land. The result has been that land has been cut up into such small blocks that men have not been able to make a decent living, and a good form of land tenure has consequently been brought into disrepute. In the back country, where 3,000 acres at least are required to enable a man to get a decent living, land has been cut up into blocks of 700, 800, and 900 acres. Under this proposal the land is to be cut up into blocks of about 200 acres.

Mr. MOORE: From 220 acres upwards!

Mr. MACDONELL: On one and a half sheep to the acre country you want much more than 220 acres, or even 300 acres, to get a decent living.

Mr. MOORE: There will be only a very few small blocks!

Mr. MACDONELL: It is a vicious principle, and I do not see why we should commit ourselves to it. In the case of suburban blocks, a man might have a business in town and like to have a bit of a farm away from the town, and work the two businesses together. While I do not think the very best results can be obtained by such a system, I do not raise any objection to it. But in country miles away from a town we ought to have blocks sufficiently large to enable a man to make a decent living. We ought not to countenance this idea of having blocks of insufficient size, and forcing men to go and earn money elsewhere. The men who have to get the whole of their living from one occupation always find their bitterest enemies in the men that can only earn a partial living on the land. I have had as much experience in that matter as any man in the state.

Mr. DAVIDSON: Does the hon. gentleman mean to say that shearers do nothing the whole year but shear sheep?

Mr. MACDONELL: No; I admit that there are a fair number of men, who go out shearing, settled on the land.

AN HON. MEMBER: Most of them!

Mr. MACDONELL: No; but I admit that there is a fair sprinkling, and those men—though there are good men amongst them—are perhaps, from a union point of view, the weakest members of the organisation. The Swiss workers working at their ordinary avocations during the day, and making Swiss watches at night, ruined the watchmaking trade in Europe. In those long Alpine nights they made watches for a mere song, and people, attracted by the cheapness of the watches, purchased them, with the result that the watchmaking trade of Europe was ruined. That has been the experience right throughout the whole field of industrial activity.

Mr. DAVIDSON: Does the hon. gentleman mean to say that the shearer makes his living by shearing alone?

Mr. MACDONELL: I say that there are a large number of men who do nothing but shear for their living. It is work of a strenuous character. After a man has been working at his top through a large number of sheds he must have rest. He would be a cripple if he worked the whole year round at shear-

ing. I know a man who lost 2 stone through working in one shed alone. The man, who is settled on the land, gets in his crops, and about August takes up shearing. At the end of November he has to return to his farm to attend to hay-cutting and other work, and he has thus only two, three, or four months to devote to shearing. There may be trouble in a shearing-shed on account, perhaps, of the men having an unreasonable boss. The shearers say, "We are going to make a stand against this. It is not fair to ask us to shear those sheep. They are wet." Those men, who have only a limited time at their disposal to do shearing, and to whom a period of idleness is of moment, will say, "They are dry enough to shear."

Mr. BALL: The hon. gentleman says that the man with a small area of land is, from the union point of view, not a good man to work with?

Mr. MACDONELL: No. What I say is that you ought to give a man a sufficient area of land to enable him to make a decent living after he has had a reasonable chance of developing it. Speaking generally, the man with an insufficient area of land, who goes working elsewhere, is the worst man that a union has to deal with, and often causes trouble by his readiness to "scab" or to agree to things that will prevent him being idle. He knows that he is losing money when he is idle, whereas the shearer who follows the shearing occupation only knows that if he does not shear the sheep this week he will get them to shear the next week, and it does not matter much to him, seeing that he follows no other occupation, whether he stands out of his wages for a day or a week. It is only reasonable to presume that you can always get the best results from the man who can devote his whole time to farming. The man who is settled upon the land, and devotes part of his time to shearing or some other occupation, cannot put the land to the same good use as the man who gives his whole time to farming. As regards this proposal, the price seems pretty high for the character of land which the board alleges it to be. On that ground I am chary of supporting the proposal. Further, seeing that it is admitted that the construction

of the railway is going to enhance the value of this estate, I do not see any good reason why we should not resume the whole of it instead of a portion only. We are going to put an additional value, as the Minister admits, of at least 20s. per acre on the whole of the land in that neighbourhood by the construction of the railway—not merely the land that we propose to resume, but the land which the owners are going to retain. Is it good business to do that? The Appeal Court will probably give the owners much more than we are offering. Not only are we going to give an additional value, by the construction of the railway to the land retained by the owners, but there is a wide disparity between the price which we offer and the price upon which the owners have been paying land-tax. Very much better results would be obtained if we resumed the whole of the land, and cut it up into larger blocks than are now proposed.

[Mr. Speaker left the chair at 6 p.m. The House resumed at 7 p.m.]

Mr. NIELSEN (Yass) [7.7] [*House counted.*]: I do not intend to oppose the resumption of this estate, for the simple reason that the Minister has stated that if the House does not approve of the resumption, the owner will have the privilege of subdividing the estate in his own way. I do not think it would be as good for the incoming farmers if the owner had the privilege of subdividing the estate as it would be if the Government resume it and subdivide it on their own terms. No private landowner is likely to give the incoming farmers such good terms as can be given by the Government. For instance, I do not know any estate that has been subdivided by a private landowner where the terms have extended over thirty-five years, as they do under the Closer Settlement Act; nor do I know of any estate that has been subdivided by a private owner where the incoming farmers are only asked to pay an annual instalment of 5 per cent. Therefore, I much prefer to see the estate that is to be cut up, cut up by the Government. But I wish to point out to the Minister and the House several things in the report of the advisory board which I think show that, although this estate is very good land,

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there are little defects. In the first instance, this is said to be good wheat land. I do not intend to say anything against that assertion. If this land is in a district, as it is, where the ordinary return, on the average, is 11 bushels per acre, and if the statements contained in this report are true—and I suppose they are—that the land is such as will carry one and a half sheep to the acre, or, to put it in the way the district surveyor puts it, will carry three sheep to 2 acres, it undoubtedly will return to the farmer, on the average, at least 11 or 12 bushels to the acre. As the wheat districts of New South Wales go, 11 bushels per acre, on the average, is a very good return. I always look with a certain amount of scepticism at suggestions for the resumption of land for closer settlement where the return is said to be much higher than that, because our experience in New South Wales has been that the really good wheat-growing districts of the state are not such as return patchy crops of 20 or 30 bushels to the acre. As a rule, if we get 11 or 12 bushels to the acre, on the average, we do very well indeed. In country where you get a spasmodic return in one year of 20 bushels to the acre, very often you get none the next year. Take, for instance, districts like the Inverell district, which I do not look upon as a good wheat-growing district. Some years in that district you get a very good return for wheat, going up to 20 or 30 bushels to the acre; but another year you cannot cart the stuff out of the paddock, because it has all been knocked down to the ground by excessive rain at harvest time. Consequently, I regard the true wheat-growing districts of the state as those which will give an average return of 11, 12, 13, or 14 bushels to the acre. I look upon this district as being within the proper wheat-belt of the state. The Cowra district is rather renowned as a wheat district, and this estate is in the Canowindra district, which is really part of that district. Therefore, I do not think there can be any serious objection on the part of hon. members to the resumption of this estate; but I want to point out that the price to be paid for this estate is getting fairly close to the margin. Last week we resumed an

estate, also in a wheat-growing district, where the return and the rainfall were practically the same as in this district, and we paid only £3 13s. or £3 14s. an acre for that estate. I allude to the Pine Ridge estate, near Dunedoo. For this estate we are to pay, on the average, taking the high-priced land with the lower-priced land, £4 8s. per acre. If we can resume wheat-growing land in one district where wheat can be grown equally advantageously for £3 14s. per acre, and when we go to another district we have to pay £4 8s. per acre for a similar class of land, I think we should direct our resumptions more to those districts where we can get wheat-growing land for the lower price. I am aware that in all the southern parts of New South Wales similar land is bringing a higher price than land in the western and central parts of New South Wales. That is principally because a large number of the wheat farmers who come to New South Wales come from Victoria and South Australia, and consequently go to Riverina first. I believe that is the cause of the high price for wheat-growing land in the southern parts of New South Wales. But when we see this anomaly in the price of wheat-growing land in different parts of New South Wales, we should direct our policy of resumption towards those parts of the state where wheat-growing land can be had at the lowest price. If we can get any more land of the same character as that in the Dunedoo district, the resumption of which the House authorised the other night, we should get it there, and not go to the more southern parts of the state and pay a much higher price for a similar class of land. I think that when you get up to £5 per acre for wheat-growing land, you are getting fairly near the margin. I believe that wheat can be grown successfully, and so as to pay interest on the cost of the land, on land for which you have to pay £5 per acre. Still I think, when you go anywhere beyond £4 an acre, you are giving the farmer, who is going on that land later on to produce wheat, a very hard task indeed to pay for the land. In this instance we are not paying £5 an acre; we are paying £4; and as this is a specially good wheat-growing district, as

I am prepared to admit it is, where they very seldom have any failure in their crops, perhaps £4 8s. an acre is not too much to pay for this estate. But in paying £4 8s. for land in this district we are getting pretty close to the margin of what can be paid by the Government for wheat-growing land, and can be used later on in profitable direction by the incoming farmer.

MR. WADDELL: I do not think there is any better wheat-growing district in New South Wales than this!

MR. NIELSEN: I quite believe that. I am prepared to admit that the Treasurer represents a district which is renowned for wheat-growing; but I am pointing out that you are giving the incoming farmer a very hard task indeed when you ask him to go on land for which you pay from £4 10s. to £5 an acre, and expect him to make interest on the money invested by wheat-growing. I do not say you are giving him an impossible task, but you are giving him a very hard task indeed. As far as that is concerned, I think in this case we are getting very close to the margin of what can fairly be paid for wheat-growing land, taking into consideration the necessities of the incoming tenant, when we propose to pay £4 8s. for this land.

MR. BALL: For the most successful closer settlement area yet acquired we paid £5 an acre!

MR. NIELSEN: I am prepared to admit that the Walla Walla estate, the one to which the hon. member refers, down in his district, was a very successful closer settlement proposition; but the farmers there have only just started.

MR. BALL: They have made a good start, too!

MR. NIELSEN: Perhaps they have. Good luck to them! No one is more anxious to see the wheat-growing population of New South Wales doing well than I am, although there are not a great many wheat-growers in the district I happen to represent; but I realise, as every hon. member realises, that in the prosperity of the wheat-farmer and the pastoralist depends the prosperity of every class in the community. I was alluding to the fact that down in the Riverina district wheat-growers are prepared to pay more for land than in

any other part of the state, and I was asking the Minister, in dealing with the matter from that point of view, to look for his resumptions more to those districts where he can get land for wheat-growing purposes at a lower price than he is compelled to pay if he goes down into the southern portions of New South Wales. The members representing those parts of the state have done fairly well in regard to the closer settlement that has taken place in New South Wales. Nearly all the estates that have been resumed for wheat-growing purposes have been resumed down in the Southern Riverina, and the members for those districts have done reasonably well; but when we take into consideration the fact that land has been sold for wheat-growing purposes in parts of New South Wales, equally adapted for wheat-growing as the Southern Riverina, for £3 10s. and £3 12s. an acre, we should direct our resumption policy, to some extent, towards those lands, and I have no doubt the Minister will do that as time goes on. There is one other matter I should like to refer to, and in doing so, perhaps, hon. members will think I am always harping on this one point, because I generally allude to it in connection with the closer settlement propositions that come before the House. I want to point to the fact that there is, to some extent, a disparity in regard to water supply on parts of this estate that are not near the Lachlan River. The report says in several places that there is no natural water supply. I do not think much of that. It also says that on portion of the estate, and in another paragraph it specifies the exact portion, water can be obtained by sinking; but it goes on to say, "There are good catchments for tanks or dams, but in places the soil is not retentive, and puddle trenches are necessary." I will read the paragraph as it stands:

There is no natural surface water supply, but on a portion of the estate an abundant supply can be obtained at a depth of about 40 feet by sinking, and there are good catchments for tanks or dams; but in places the soil is not retentive, and puddle trenches are necessary.

I am always very chary about country where the small farmer will have a difficulty in getting a local water supply

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for his little block. It very often happens that in the case of a station of 10,000, 12,000, or 14,000 acres you may be able to get an excellent water supply; but when you divide that area into thirty or forty small holdings, it will frequently happen that the small holders are put to their wits' end to obtain a proper and efficient water supply.

Mr. MOORE: Generally speaking, the ground is retentive. Look at page 3, paragraph 7!

Mr. NIELSEN: Perhaps the hon. gentleman will let me deal with it in my own way. In the first final report of the board, dated 1st September, 1908, there is a clause to this effect:

8. There is no natural surface water upon the area proposed to be acquired, but an abundant supply is obtainable by sinking to a depth of about 40 feet on portions 9, 6, 11A, 12, and 17, parish of Bangaroo. There are also fair to good catchments for tanks and dams all over the area, but in many parts the soil is not retentive, except a puddle trench be sunk round the tank to prevent soakage.

The board deals with the same matter in the last final report. I may explain that in this case there were two final reports by the Closer Settlement Board owing to the fact that after the first *Gazette* notice was issued there was an additional *Gazette* notice bringing this estate within the terms of what are called railway resumptions. In their last final report the board go on to say:

There is no natural surface water, but an abundant supply is obtainable by sinking to a depth of about 40 feet on portions 9, 6, 11A, 12, and 17, parish of Bangaroo. There are also fair to good facilities for conservation in tanks and dams all over the area, but in many parts the soil is not retentive on the surface, and it would be necessary to sink a puddle trench round the tank to prevent soakage.

It specifically points out where the well-water can be obtained, and the well-water can only be obtained on very small portions of the estate, as far as the advisory board know. I am not going to suggest that well-water cannot be obtained on other portions of the estate, but as far as the advisory board knew when they issued their last final report well-water could only be obtained on four or five portions in one particular parish, when the estate extends over several

parishes in the county. Consequently we only have information before us that this well-water can be obtained on a very small portion indeed of the area of land to be acquired for closer settlement. Therefore I have some doubt as to whether the incoming farmer who will have to go upon this land will be quite sure of being able to obtain on his particular farm a good catchment area, where he will not have difficulty either in obtaining well-water or in retaining water in the dam once he has constructed it. Because, if you start constructing dams or tanks in country which is admittedly not retentive, even if you go to the extent of building puddle drains, it will very often happen that the puddle drain will not have the effect of making the tank hold water. Hon. members who understand these matters know that very often country is not retentive owing to the fact that you have a substratum of sandy soil, or else you come to a class of rock which carries the water away. It often happens that the country is not retentive because of a stratum of that description; and if that is the cause in this instance, where land is not retentive, then the farmers going on to the estate will have considerable difficulty in providing themselves with the necessary water to carry on their farming operations. Not having this information before me, I am not going to oppose the resumption on account of this deficiency, which may be made good. I hope, for the sake of the resumption, and of the incoming farmers, it will be found that this report with regard to the retentive nature of the soil is not of such a character as to prevent the ordinary individual who makes a dam or sinks a tank from getting a sufficient water supply. I wish to refer to the way in which it is proposed to cut up this estate. I agree with the hon. member for Cobar that if we are going to use this land for closer settlement purposes we should as nearly as possible make every farm sufficient to keep a family under ordinary circumstances. I have no objection to the Minister doing what he did in the case of the Peel River estate, where certain portions near a town were cut up into small blocks to enable labourers of all descriptions to acquire a homestead

area. But I do not believe in half-and-half shandy-gaff settlement. I do not believe in a man having just half enough land to live on who is compelled for part of the year to earn his living in some other way. It very often happens, I do not say in every case, that if a man has not sufficient land on which to make a living, he is compelled to work for other people for part of his time, and very often he is obliged to undercut the ordinary labourer, who has to live exclusively by his labour. That is particularly noticeable in the settled districts, where scrubbing and clearing and work of that description is often done by contract. When a farmer has to work for an adjoining squatter, clearing and scrubbing, he is often compelled to work for a lower rate than is given to other contractors.

Mr. BURGESS: Does not the hon. member think that if a man can get £300 a year from his farm he will be getting a fair return?

Mr. NIELSEN: No. If the land is cut up into farms of 220 acres there is no possibility of a man making £300 a year.

Mr. MOORE: Those are the smallest blocks!

Mr. NIELSEN: I want the Minister to increase those areas. Supposing a man has 220 acres, that he gets 11 bushels of wheat to the acre, and 3s. a bushel for his wheat, his return will be £342 per annum. But to get that return he will have to expend at least £100 a year.

Mr. MILLARD: In what?

Mr. NIELSEN: In all sorts of things. He must have a full machinery plant worth £1,000, if he works the land properly, just as if he were working 400 or 500 acres. The return I have given is on the supposition that he ploughs every acre. But he cannot do that. He must have 40 or 50 acres around his house as a horse and cow paddock. He cannot live like a savage, and he must have fourteen or fifteen horses. Consequently he will have a very much reduced area for his crop.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member only allows 11 bushels to the acre, whereas the average is put down at 14 bushels to the acre!

Mr. NIELSEN: The board says that the average is 11 bushels to the acre, and I undertake to say that the average for many years to come will not be more than that. 220 acres of bush land is not sufficient to keep a man if he is going to be a farmer and do no work outside. I disapprove altogether of the idea of using our money to purchase closer settlement land, and at the same time to settle on that land men who will live partly on the land and partly by outside work.

Mr. McGOWEN: Will this area of land ultimately keep the man?

Mr. NIELSEN: No, it never will. He takes up the land on improvement conditions, and in my estimate I have assumed that he will be able to plough every acre, which as a matter of fact he cannot do. I urge the Minister not to throw open the land in this fashion. If he resumes wheat land for closer settlement, and I believe that will be the case in the majority of instances, I hope he will not divide the land into 220-acre blocks. I am not opposed to small blocks in every case. We resumed an estate last week where I advocated that it should be divided into small blocks, because it was fit for dairying and growing potatoes. Small blocks will give living areas in such a case. The basis of our closer settlement proposals should be that the land should be cut up into living areas. We can perhaps deal with our Crown lands in a different way, and we may then supply this demand, which seems to exist for blocks which are less than living areas. We are often compelled to throw open blocks of Crown land in small areas because we throw open land which has been in reserves for a long time. Let us supply the demand for that class of settlement from Crown lands, but do not spend the people's money in resuming land for closer settlement and then cut it up into less than living areas.

Mr. MOORE: Broadly speaking, I agree with the hon. member; but what I am saying is, that we have a few small blocks here and there which will meet the needs of some men!

Mr. NIELSEN: Let the Minister make them as few as possible. If it was proposed to cut up fifteen or twenty

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10-acre or 20-acre blocks near the town of Cowra, I would have no objection to that at all, because that supplies a different class of demand altogether; but what I do object to is, putting men on closer settlement areas for the ostensible purpose of their living on those areas, and admitting before you put them there that they cannot live without doing some outside work. The following extract from the report justifies the position which I am taking up:—

We consider that the total area of 11,511 acres can be suitably subdivided into about thirty-two farms, varying in area from about 220 acres to 610 acres; and, in our opinion, subdivision into farms of these sizes would be popular amongst a number of intending settlers, who have insufficient means to take up large areas, and who, unless special provision be made for them, would be debarred from acquiring any land at all.

At the same time, we do not contend that a man with an average family could, by grazing and the cultivation of cereals, live entirely from the proceeds of one of the smaller blocks; but that, owing to the satisfactory rainfall, and the fact that the land is centrally situated in a populous district, the acquisition of a small farm would be a great assistance to a man of limited means, as it would afford a home for his family, and his spare time could be utilised in outside work to supplement his income.

The advisory board, while suggesting that these small areas should be thrown open, admits straight away that they are not sufficient to enable men to make a living upon them. With the exception of these objections, I am not going to oppose the resumption of this estate. The only result of refusing to resume would be that the owners would cut it up themselves, and would get the advantage of the enhanced value given to the land by the construction of the railway, which rightly belongs to the people. While, perhaps, the whole of that enhanced value need not be added to the lands, as far as the incoming settlers are concerned, so that the last pound of flesh may not be taken from them, still that enhanced value belongs to the public, and should not be given to the owners. As regards the case going before the Appeal Court, I desire to know from the Minister whether this resumption will come under

the provisions of the Closer Settlement Amendment Bill in connection with the payment of costs.

Mr. MOORE: There is no doubt about that!

Mr. NIELSEN: That gets over a great deal of the difficulty that has always presented itself to me when we proposed to send these cases to the Appeal Court. If, when the amending bill becomes law, an owner has to pay the costs of the action, unless he succeeds in getting a price beyond a certain amount, he will be a little more careful about rushing to the court than he is under existing circumstances. I do not think that the Government will, under the provisions of the amending bill, be likely to be "taken down," if I may use the term, to the same extent as they have been hitherto. I refer particularly to the Brookong case. In that case the Government paid a considerable amount in excess of the value of the land, through the costs being a charge upon the very small area that we resumed. In the Peel River case, owing to the large area over which the costs were distributed, the settlers had not to pay so much, proportionately, as in the Brookong case. The amending bill will have the effect of preventing owners from desiring to go to the Appeal Court; and when a case does go to the court, it will prevent such a large amount being added to the cost of the land as was added in the Brookong case.

Mr. FITZPATRICK (Orange) [7.37]: The position taken up by the hon. member for Yass in regard to the small areas is a perfectly tenable one; but those men who take up the small areas will, as is suggested by the advisory board, have the opportunity of utilising their spare time in other directions. I do not agree with the hon. members for Cobar and Yass, who take exception to the men who go upon the land utilising their spare time in working elsewhere, and I do not think that there are the objectionable features associated with such a practice as the hon. gentlemen stated. As a matter of fact, there are a large number of men who desire to go upon the land, but who have not the means to secure a sufficiently large holding at the outset. Their means are limited, and they secure at the beginning the nucleus of a holding, upon which they will eventually make a decent

living. In the meantime, while they are rendering that area profitable, they provide themselves by working elsewhere with the wherewithal to keep themselves and their families. As regards the blocks of 220 acres, I have made a calculation which shows that, on a yield of 12 bushels per acre, and at a price of 4s. per bushel—which is a long way above the average—a farmer will secure a return of £440 per annum. Taking into consideration the expenses that have to be incurred in ploughing and sowing, and maintaining a family, there is practically nothing left for the farmer.

Mr. MOORE: It is a better return than that of a man working on wages!

Mr. FITZPATRICK: Yes; but the hon. gentleman is assuming that the farmer is going to get a full harvest every year. As a matter of fact, in the western districts, this is the only year during the past four years in which a large proportion of the farming population have got anything at all from their farms.

Mr. MOORE: In those three wheat districts, embracing a very large area, the average yield, during the past fifteen years, was 11 bushels per acre. That means that this land, which is the pick, gave an average yield of about 14 or 15 bushels, and perhaps 20 or 30 bushels in some years!

Mr. FITZPATRICK: But the man who takes up the land has to take one year with another. The advisory board consider that it will be necessary for those who take up the smaller farms to do outside work in some of their spare time in order to enable them to make a living. I do not take exception to that. It ought to be competent for these men to put in their spare time by doing outside work, and I know that many men who would make good settlers have not the means to take up larger blocks.

Mr. MCGOWEN: They will never be able to take up a living area, because they will be restricted to an area not capable of maintaining them!

Mr. FITZPATRICK: It will be necessary for the holders of these small blocks to go in for something besides wheat-growing, and to utilise their holdings to the best advantage. I noticed recently a reference in one of the newspapers

to a holding of 100 acres in New Zealand from which the owner, by following mixed farming methods, made a profit of £1,160 as the result of last year's work. The block was only commonplace land, and the products were such as would be obtained here under mixed farming methods.

Mr. MCGOWEN: What could the holders of these areas do beyond growing wheat?

Mr. FITZPATRICK: They could keep a few sheep and a few cattle, and generally follow up mixed farming.

Mr. MCGARRY: They could not run many sheep on 220 acres!

Mr. FITZPATRICK: They might run a few—but very few. Assuming that the Government valuation is correct, the 220-acre holdings would represent a value of considerably over £1,000, and a man ought to be able to make a living on a settlement purchase worth that amount of money. Reference was recently made in one of the newspapers to the North Logan estate, and, judging from the statements there made, the Government will be making a good bargain in purchasing the estate at the valuation they have placed upon it. After the original proclamation a portion of the estate was sold for £5 10s. per acre to a Mr. Boxall, who bought on terms, and if we are to be guided by what land of this kind brings in the open market the Government are making a good bargain. When the owners of estates show a disposition to subdivide their land, I think we should give them every opportunity to do so. When the owners of the Peel River estate showed that they were disposed to subdivide the estate on terms acceptable to the Government I voted against the Government resuming the estate.

Mr. MOORE: They did not propose to subdivide on terms satisfactory to the Government!

Mr. FITZPATRICK: I understood that they were prepared to subdivide on certain terms which should have encouraged the Government to enter into negotiations, with the object of removing any features that they might consider objectionable.

Mr. MOORE: I could convince the hon. member that he is taking quite a wrong view!

[*Mr. Fitzpatrick.*]

Mr. FITZPATRICK: I am merely referring to the matter in order to indicate what I believe should be the policy of the department. If the owners of private estates are willing to sell their land on anything like reasonable conditions, we should allow them to do so, and devote our energies to resuming estates in other directions. The funds at the disposal of the Government are limited, and the demand for land for settlement is very large, and we should, as far as possible, endeavour to secure the co-operation of the owners of large estates. I look upon this proposal as a good one. I regard the district as one eminently suited for closer settlement purposes—more so than are some of the districts far removed from railway communication. I believe that those who are fortunate enough to secure settlement purchases in the subdivision will be able to do well for themselves, that the transaction will be satisfactory so far as the Government are concerned, and that it will confer benefit on the community as a whole.

Mr. MCGOWEN (Redfern) [7.50]: I altogether differ from the hon. member for Orange in regard to the statement he has made as to the right of the Government to step in and resume estates where the owners are prepared to subdivide them. I admit that the hon. member's argument may be tenable and forcible if he will leave the railway lines alone; but when the Government propose to construct a railway, and by the construction of that railway in a country where there is no railway communication they will give an added value of 15s. to £1 an acre to the land, I think it is only fair, in the interests of the taxpayers, who pay for enhancing the value of that land, that the Government should step in and take the estate, and not allow any speculator to reap the benefit of the enhanced value brought about by the construction of the railway paid for with the taxpayers' money. The whole force of the argument of the hon. member for Orange falls to the ground. I question whether the inspired paragraph to which the hon. member referred, signed, I believe, by a "Sufferer," has any force at all when we come to examine it in the light of the cold facts brought out in the report of the advisory board as to the

market value of the land. If we want any further proof we have only to look into this thing closely for ourselves. The paragraph states that a gentleman named Boxall came in and bought land for £5 10s. an acre, which the Government propose to resume for £5 an acre. How far does that compare with the cold logic of the facts we have before us? The advisory board put a value on the land. The owners came very close to the offer made by the advisory board, with the exception, I think, of 10s. 6d. and 8s. 6d. an acre for the various lands. I question very much whether it could be shown that £5 10s. an acre was paid even for land bought on terms by Mr. Boxall from Mr. Sloan. It is altogether different from our experience last week, where the original owner disposed of his estate and a certain time elapsed, and then the Government came along and paid an improved price on the price at which the first owner sold to the second owner. Let me direct hon. members' attention to the fictitious value of £5 10s. an acre. One has only to look at the value of this land when people paid land-tax upon it to see whether they could have got £5 10s. and £4 19s. per acre for it when the land was valued. I admit straightaway, as the Minister shows, that we are taking only 11,000 acres out of something like 22,000 acres. Between the value put on this land for land-tax purposes and the value accepted by the shire council, and the improved value at which we are purchasing the land, there is a considerable margin. When the whole of this land was taxed for unimproved land-tax purposes, they paid on only £1 17s. 2d. per acre for some of the land, and on £1 19s. 3d. per acre for the other. We are offering £5 and £4 19s. per acre. We are now buying this land at its improved value. The shire valuation for the improved value works out at about £2 19s. 8d. and £3 6s. per acre. So we are giving £4 6s. for what the shire council valued at £2 19s. 8d., and we are giving £5 for what the shire council valued at £3 6s. Therefore the margin, £1 14s., for unimproved value is a very fair margin indeed when we consider that the Government are paying a fair market value for the land.

Mr. MOORE: That comparison, of course, is not a true one, as I explained. We do not know, as a matter of fact, the exact value for taxation purposes of this particular land, because it was included in a large area, and we get the best of the land!

Mr. MCGOWEN: The Government, I know, are taking 11,000 acres out of 22,000, and they are not taking the worst of the land.

Mr. MOORE: Exactly!

Mr. MCGOWEN: I am only answering the contention of the hon. member for Orange, to show that the inspired paragraph to which he referred, although put in ostensibly by a sufferer, was really put in by an interested person. In this resumption we are not going to give to any private owner the enhanced value which we create by the building of a railway. Now I come to a point which I consider the hon. member for Orange, speaking as a country member, did not lay much stress upon, and which has been raised by the hon. members for Cobar and Yass. I want hon. members to note the very important fact that in connection with closer settlement the tendency may be to give people too much land, and as this policy develops in the next decade we will find that we will have to resubdivide, because, as I pointed out the other night, there may be conditions where people having more than a living area which do not enable us, as far as permanent settlement is concerned, to utilise all the land for the settlement of the people which we could do if we had not given such large areas. Now we come to another difficulty and danger—a danger that has been recognised and tried to be guarded against by all our land administration for very many years. When you place people on less than a living area there are always those in the House and elsewhere who say that people should have an additional area, because it is impossible for them to live on the small area at their disposal. We defeat the very purpose of our closer settlement policy so far as permanent settlement is concerned if we do not give settlers a sufficient area on which they can live and support an average family. In these closer settlement areas it is impossible for us to get over the difficulty, as we

have got over it in connection with the alienation of Crown land, where additional areas have been given. Once you divide an estate into thirty-two blocks for thirty-two settlers, if half a dozen of these settlers have less than a living area, the only hope is to get them to retire from it and to split up their land amongst the others. In the dividing up of this estate the Minister should see that the people placed on these areas will be able to gain a living independently of doing anything else. What was the force of the argument used by the hon. member for Orange? The hon. member said that these men would be able to go in for a little grazing. It is evident that the hon. member has not read the paragraph in the report of the board, to which the hon. member for Yass drew attention, and which says, "At the same time we do not contend that a man with an average family could, by grazing and the cultivation of cereals, live entirely from the proceeds of one of the smaller blocks." It would appear from that, that with our eyes open, we are, in effect and to a certain extent, deceiving settlers by inviting them to take up areas of land from which we know they cannot in average circumstances reap a living. What is the good of putting settlers on such areas if they must fail? The only result will be to force them into the towns, which may not be in want of the class of labour that these men can give. There should always be in every settler's mind the hope that by the expenditure of his money and the exercise of his labour, he will be able to earn a comfortable living, and that his farm will maintain him so long as he is prepared to work it. We cannot get away from the fact that it is not possible for settlers to make a living on the blocks it is proposed to offer to them on this estate. What will follow? The men who are anxious to settle know as much as the advisory board, certainly more than we do, with regard to the possibilities of the country, and they will not apply for these areas, which they know are insufficient to support them.

Mr. WADDELL: The hon. member will find there are many practical men who will differ from him altogether!

[Mr. McGowen.

Mr. MCGOWEN: This estate is in the hon. member's district. My answer to the hon. member's interjection is, that the practical men who will be prepared to apply for these blocks will not wholly devote their time to farming. They may be engine-drivers. That is not bringing about closer settlement.

Mr. WADDELL: There are some men whose means will enable them to go in for farming!

Mr. MCGOWEN: The hon. member must recognise that the principle of our closer settlement policy is to put new settlers in the interior, and to keep them there when we put them there. We do not want to take a man who is driving an engine, and who will drive it until he is 60, and allow him in his spare time to cultivate one of these blocks. He is not a settler.

Mr. G. A. JONES: He is only a feather-bed farmer!

Mr. MCGOWEN: The hon. member for Yass termed it "shandygaff" farming. That is not what we desire to see. There may be men in Cowra and Canowindra who will apply for one of these smaller blocks, but that will be no assistance to the state. These people are already settled in the town, following some occupation. What we desire is, to settle the waste lands, 5, 6, and 10 miles outside the town, and to put new settlers on the soil. The proposal we are invited to consider is a milk-and-water closer settlement arrangement which is altogether at variance with the underlying principle of our Closer Settlement Acts. It will be better for the Minister to reduce the number of the blocks, and increase the size of the areas, so that each settler, once he gets upon the block, will be able to realise his expectations, and maintain himself and his family. There will be no hope for them to get an additional area. The point raised by the hon. member for Yass is worthy of consideration. I hope that in all our closer settlement proposals we shall secure that settlers have a living area, and no more.

Mr. BURGESS (Burrangong) [8.7]: I intend to support this proposed resumption. I should not have spoken but for the remarks that have fallen from the hon. member for Cobar, the hon. member for Yass, and the hon. member, the leader

of the Opposition, with regard to the question of the area which the Closer Settlement Board have laid down for the proposed farms. I believe that the man who intends to go upon the land is the one who should be consulted. You are not going to shut a man out from getting a farm because he has not sufficient money to take up 400 or 500 acres. My opinion is, that if a man has saved sufficient money to enable him to take up 220 instead of 330 acres, he should be allowed to take up that area. He should be the best judge as to whether such a farm will pay him or not.

Mr. NIELSEN: That would be good policy if you could give him an additional area later on!

Mr. BURGESS: With regard to the country under discussion —

Mr. MCGOWEN: Can a settler live on 220 acres?

Mr. BURGESS: He can.

Mr. WADDELL: And do well on it!

Mr. MCGOWEN: The advisory board says not!

Mr. BURGESS: I think that the advisory board exceeded their powers when they included that paragraph in their report. Some of this country will strip, not 14, but from 25 to 30 bushels to the acre—that is, country not as good as that proposed to be resumed.

An HON. MEMBER: They might do that in a special year!

Mr. BURGESS: Settlers on this country are not going to confine themselves to wheat-growing. Those who know anything at all about farming are aware that you can only grow wheat at a certain period of the year.

Mr. FITZPATRICK: You have six months in the year to do otherwise!

Mr. WADDELL: You can run sheep on the same land!

Mr. BURGESS: A settler will have ample opportunity, if he is a practical farmer, to fatten lambs on this land. If you give a man 220 acres of country of the character of that contained in this estate, as close to a railway as this land is, he should be able to keep himself and his family without putting himself on the labour market at all. We should not shut out that kind of man. The man would not be a very poor man who would be able to take up one of these areas.

The average price of the land is £4 8s. an acre, which would come to about £1,000 for a farm, and a man who would pay a deposit of 5 per cent. on that to start with would not be a very poor man, even if he were taking up only 220 acres. It would be nonsense to shut out a man because he had not £300 or £400 in hand to enable him to buy a large plant to work a big farm. A man would be a great deal worse off on a farm of 500 acres than on a farm of 220 acres; he might be able to work the latter when he would not be able to work the former.

Mr. NIELSEN: Following that out to its logical conclusion, a farmer would be better on an area of 100 acres!

Mr. BURGESS: On a farm of 500 acres, a man would require twice as much capital as on 220 acres. A man with a limited amount of capital would do better on 220 acres than on 400 acres; he would be able to work the farm with greater advantage to himself. The worst feature of our land settlement has been that people have had too much land. They have not been able to work it. I could point to numerous instances where men with 1,500 acres have not been able to work it to advantage. A man with 200 odd acres would see that the whole of the farm was worked to advantage, and would probably make a great deal more out of it than he would out of 500 acres, with sufficient capital to enable him to buy a large plant for wheat-growing. This country is one of the best in New South Wales for wheat-growing. The wheat grown is superior for milling purposes to wheat grown even in other parts of the same district. Perhaps 220 acres might be a little too small an area, and we might make it 300 acres. If not 300, then 220; but I would rather see a margin, so that the holder would have a chance of making a living without having to go upon the labour market. As interjected by the hon. member who represents this district, I know that there are scores of people there who are only waiting for an opportunity to get on this country with a decent area of land. They are shut out from the larger areas because they have not the capital; and if, in these subdivisions, provision were made for smaller areas, they would have an opportunity of getting

farms such as they are desirous of obtaining. I have some little knowledge of farming, and of the farming districts, and I feel positive that, even with the area fixed at 220 acres, this land will be over-applied for by numbers of men who want that area, who are only able to apply for that area, and who, when they get it, will be able to make a living off it without going on the labour market.

Mr. BALL (Corowa) [8.5]: Hon. members who have addressed the House, especially from the other side, have spoken in reference to the question of a living area in connection with these closer settlement resumptions. I quite agree with the hon. member for Yass when he says that when we place men on the land we should place them on living areas; but the trouble is, that we cannot come to an agreement as to what is a living area.

Mr. MCGOWEN: You have that fixed up in the different land districts—as to what is a living area!

Mr. BALL: No; indeed we have not. There is nothing fixed up in the land districts as to what is a living area. In every land district, the land varies very much in quality. A certain area might be a living area in one district, and half a mile away, half that area would be sufficient.

Mr. MCGOWEN: The land boards know that!

Mr. BALL: The land boards have to deal with each case on its merits. But this question does not come before the land boards. These areas are supposed to be subdivided into living areas. Some men can make a living on an area half as large as that required for a living area by other men.

Mr. MCGOWEN: Under similar conditions?

Mr. BALL: Yes; under similar conditions. One man may adopt a different method of farming from another, and may not acquire such a large area. Only about a fortnight ago, when some of the members of the House were down in my district with the Minister, they met an old farmer there who had been in the district for a long time, right up against the Walla Walla estate, which was recently resumed, and he showed them a sample of currants he had grown on his

land. He told them that he made £200 clear off 5 acres of currants on a farm alongside the Walla Walla subdivision.

Mr. NIELSEN: Would that justify our cutting up Walla Walla into 5-acre blocks?

Mr. BALL: No, it would not; but my reply to that is this: that men adopt different methods of dealing with land, and some may be prepared to accept smaller areas than others. When you provide for a small area as well as for a large area, you are endeavouring to meet the varied requirements of those who want to take up different lines of production. Where the currants were grown, it is also good country for grapes. The district was looked upon as a wheat-growing one, and a man might say that in that district you would want 640 acres to be able to make a living; but where a man might desire to follow some other line of production, a much smaller area would suffice for his requirements. It is a wise provision to give people who desire a smaller area an opportunity of being able to use it. When we resume land and pay big prices for it, as we have had to do up to the present time, our main object should be to make the land go as far as possible, and put as many people as we possibly can on the land, in the interests of closer settlement. The leader of the Opposition, I think, would subscribe to that—that our object should be to provide as much as we can, and give those who desire land the opportunity of being able to take it up. Therefore, you must look at the question of area, to some extent. But when we come to the question of a living area, we are up against a proposition that none of us are able to solve—we cannot say what is a living area. The hon. member for Yass has referred to his experience. I will give him mine. Not long ago, an elector in my district told me that this was a country good enough to get out of, and that he had decided to sell his property and go to Queensland. That same man, many years ago, came to me and said that if I could get him a certain block of 320 acres he would be able to make a living on it. He got the 320 acres, and after he was on it for a short time he found that it was not a living area, and he got an addition, making it

[Mr. Burgess.]

up to 640 acres. He bought out somebody else, and got 1,200 acres. Afterwards he acquired 3,000 or 4,000 acres, and he told me he had not got a living area, and that he was going to leave the country, and he sold his land at £5 per acre. If you take the evidence of those on the land, it does not matter what they own, they will generally tell you they have not got a living area. We have to draw the line somewhere. It is my experience that the men who have retained their original 640 acres are now the most solid men in the district. If we provide a man with a square mile of country in any wheat-growing district, it will be a good living area; but in connection with closer settlement proposals, our object should be to make the land go as far as possible. I disagree with the hon. member for Yass when he says that he objects to men on the land working in the open market in competition with other labourers. In a great many of those cases they are not compelled to go out; but they do so because, at certain periods of the year, such as the shearing season, they can make a great deal of money. I do not object to their doing that, and the Minister is taking a proper course in making small areas available near towns and village settlements to provide workmen's blocks. It is not necessary that they should be living areas; but a workman can make a permanent, decent home on these blocks, and also utilise his spare labour while he provides for domestic comforts. A small area of 220 acres will meet the wants of those who cannot afford to take up a larger block, and they can go in for intense culture.

Mr. MCGOWEN: What does the hon. member mean by that? Does he mean growing currants?

Mr. BALL: A man can go in for fruit culture, and near the town of Cowra a man can grow many things which will be more profitable than wheat. For instance, take the fattening of stock. I now refer to a specific case, not far from Albury, where a man holds only 190 acres; yet, by means of intense culture, he sends into the Albury cattle market more fat stock than an adjoining holding of 750 acres.

AN HON. MEMBER: By artificial feeding?

Mr. BALL: Yes; by growing rape. This man makes a really good living. We must now recognise that what we look upon as a living area to-day will be looked upon in the future as being large enough for two or three families. That has been the history of the world, and it must be the history of Australia in future, although we have not arrived at that point yet.

Mr. DAVIDSON (Hastings and Macleay) [8.25]: I would not have spoken at this late hour of the session if I had not the experience two years ago of going over this property, which I was then told was likely to be resumed. I looked at the land to learn its possibilities, and I am pleased that the Minister now asks that we should sanction its resumption. In the report we are told that the country is badly infested with rabbits, but that when they are destroyed the land, when fully improved, will have a carrying capacity of one and a half sheep to the acre in average seasons. When I saw the property two years ago it was like many other properties scattered everywhere throughout the state, and the sooner it is resumed by the Government and cut up for closer settlement the better it will be for the country. It was badly improved, covered with rabbits from one end to the other, and it is no wonder that people in the district asked for its resumption, because of the benefits that that would confer on the district. Judging by the surrounding land, which is farmed by settlers, I recognise that it is capable of doing all that is stated in this report, and therefore I am fully in accord with the Minister in hoping that the House will concur with the resumption of the property at the prices proposed—that is, £5 for one area and £4 6s. 6d. for the other—so far as the cost will come close to those prices. I believe that it should be cut up in areas varying from 220 to 620 acres. The time has come for the Minister and the House to recognise, as the hon. member for Corowa has pointed out, that the living areas as fixed throughout the land board districts are too large. In travelling throughout the country during the past two years I have found men on areas

of 60 acres, 80 acres, 100 acres, or 120 acres, swearing on oath that they have been making a living on those areas in districts where a living area is supposed to be 2,000 or 3,000 acres. I recognise from what I saw in the Bolubula and the Lachlan districts, contiguous to this land which is under consideration, that there are areas where 40 acres of lucerne land on the flats would be a living area for a settler. The same would be the case for a man with an orchard. There are areas where 220 acres would be sufficient for general farming. I would not ask the House to be fooled with the idea that wheat-farming is going to be the only kind of farming in future. Valuable experience has been gained by the farmers in that district from the working of the Cowra Experimental Farm. I can easily believe what the hon. member for Corowa has stated as to the profits to be derived from fattening sheep on a small area. It is possible for any selector of average land in the Cowra district to do what has been done by the selector referred to in the Albury district. The experience that the Cowra Experimental Farm manager is giving to the surrounding farmers is this: that instead of fallowing half the land for wheat crops, they can grow green crops, such as rape or cow-peas, for the purpose of fattening their lambs, and instead of looking forward to that 20s. per acre which the hon. member for Yass said might be got from 220 acres —

Mr. NIELSEN: I did not say anything about 20s. an acre!

Mr. DAVIDSON: It practically amounted to that. The hon. gentleman said that a return of 33s. per acre would be obtained from 220 acres of wheat, and allowing £100 for expenses, the return came to about 20s. per acre. If a man were able, by putting half of his land under green crops, to fatten 200, 300, or 400 lambs a year his return would be considerably larger than that estimated by the hon. member for Yass.

Mr. MCGOWEN: And cultivate the other half?

Mr. DAVIDSON: Yes; and also utilise the wheat land during some part of the year for fattening lambs or sheep. The district is well adapted for fruit-growing, and any portion of the land

[Mr. Davidson.]

above flood-level might be utilised for that purpose. So that by mixed farming—growing wheat, oats, lucerne, or fruit, and raising sheep or lambs—a man would be able to make a good living for himself and his family on 220 acres. The time is not far distant when it will be recognised that 220 acres in the Cowra or the Canowindra district is a suitable living area, and I hope that the example which the Minister is giving in the subdivision of this estate into comparatively small areas will be the forerunner of a much closer settlement policy in the future than has been the case hitherto.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

DEFAMATION (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Motion (by Mr. MOORE) agreed to:

That the following message be sent to the Legislative Council:—

Mr. PRESIDENT,—

The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the Legislative Assembly's message, dated 9th December, 1909, requesting its concurrence in certain amendments made by the Council in the Defamation (Amendment) Bill,—

In clause 5,—Agrees to the insertion of new paragraph (b), but proposes to amend the amendment by inserting at the commencement thereof the words "a fair and accurate report of the proceedings."

Agrees to the proviso in paragraph (c), but proposes to amend it by inserting after the word "proceedings" the words "of such court as."

Agrees to the amendment, page 3, line 36, but proposes to amend it by omitting the letter "e" and the word "and," and by inserting after the letter ("g") the words "and (h),"—

In which amendments the Assembly requests the concurrence of the Legislative Council.

Agrees to the other amendments made by the Council in the bill.

Legislative Assembly Chamber,
Sydney 14th December, 1909.

CLOSER SETTLEMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL.

In Committee (consideration of Legislative Council's message):

(Mr. NIELSEN in the chair.)

Mr. MOORE (Bingara), Secretary for Lands [8.39], said he desired to briefly indicate to the Committee the intentions

of the Government in regard to the Legislative Council's amendments in this bill. The points in dispute were reduced to three clauses—clause 9, in which the Council had made an amendment; clause 10, which the Council insisted upon omitting; and clause 11, which the Council insisted upon omitting, a new clause being substituted for it. The Government had decided to accept, for the time-being, the Legislative Council's amendments. Whilst he was asking the Committee to agree to these amendments, he did not concur in the attitude adopted by the Legislative Council, who were not facilitating the making of agreements between the owners of land and the Government. No doubt their desire was to make smoother the path of the landowner in his relations with the Government in regard to private subdivisions; but, instead of accomplishing this object, they were making it more difficult. More stringent conditions would have to be inserted in any agreement than would have been necessary had the Legislative Council accepted the original proposal, or made some reasonable amendment. The Legislative Council did not insist on the omission of clause 9, but had made a further amendment by striking out all the words after the word "same." Clause 9 required that on any sale, lease, transfer, or mortgage being effected, one of the parties would be required to submit the transaction to the Minister. If it was not so submitted within the time prescribed, it was provided that "the same may be declared void by the Governor." The Legislative Council regarded this penalty as too severe. At first sight, it would appear that the amendment omitting the provision for the penalty rendered the clause nugatory; but he would show hon. members that, after all, it really did not matter, because in any agreement that was made, the Minister would take very good care that one of the conditions in the agreement was, that any transactions in the land should be submitted to him. That could be made one of the conditions of the agreement, and, failing compliance, there would, of course, be the penalty.

Mr. McGOWEN: But supposing the owner does not agree to that condition?

Mr. MOORE: Then no agreement would be arrived at. The provision was permissive and voluntary.

Mr. BURGESS: The Minister has explained how he feels; but his successor might take a different view!

Mr. MOORE thought it would be safe to assume that any Minister would take care that the agreement was of such a character that it would stand the light of day. The Legislative Council insisted on its amendment omitting clause 10, and he admitted that the reason they gave was a good one. He did not admit that the provision would improperly restrict the power of agreement; but he did agree that the Minister had full and more direct power in clause 4 to stipulate for any provisions or conditions he might think essential in the public interest. Without clause 10 it would be competent for the Minister to insist that any land should be leased, either with the option of purchase or with tenant right in improvement. He would have preferred an express enactment on the point, so that there might be no mistake about it; but any Minister making an agreement with an owner would take care that any leases were made under these conditions. He did not attach any importance to clause 10. In connection with clause 11, the most important question required to be considered. The Legislative Council proposed to omit clause 11, and substitute a provision which did not expressly enact the conditions that were to be contained in any agreement entered into between the Minister and an owner who was willing to privately subdivide. The clause in the bill contained conditions which ought to be in the agreement, and the object of making that provision was to ensure that when an owner had faithfully carried out the conditions of an agreement and disposed of his lands, he should be free from all further difficulty, and the Crown should be free to control any transactions in the land afterwards for a period of five years. He thought the period should be longer. The original proposal was for ten years, but this was cut down to five years. Although, under the amendment of the Legislative Council, the Government would not get everything they desired to make it clear, so that everyone

who might have any intention to acquire settlement purchases would know the conditions attached to the holding, they would rest content with the provision for the present. The Government had no intention to allow the matter to remain at this stage. They merely accepted the proposal for the time-being, because it would be undesirable, at this time, to enter upon a conflict with the Legislative Council. The Government could, although under more difficulty, carry out their intentions, but to what extent he was not prepared to say. They could, by making very stringent conditions in the agreement, practically secure the greater part of what they wanted. They had desired to make the path of the landowner easy in regard to private subdivision; but the Legislative Council, in its desire to protect the interests of landowners, had made the path more difficult. There were owners who preferred to carry out subdivisions themselves rather than that the Crown should forcibly resume their properties; and so long as they were prepared to do so under conditions which would reasonably assure closer settlement—if not for all time, at any rate for the present—they should be allowed to do so. For some years it would be to the advantage of the state to encourage private subdivision under these conditions. The time was coming, and coming soon, when the state would insist upon imposing reasonable conditions in regard to these private subdivisions. However, we were practically compelled, for the time-being, to accept the proposals now before us. He and the Government were actuated, to a large extent, by the consideration that a conflict with the other Chamber at the present time was not at all unlikely to result in the loss of the bill. He did not want to lose the bill, because there were in it, not only provisions which would make the machinery of the existing law work more smoothly and satisfactorily, but also provisions which would enable men who would be desirable settlers, but were disqualified under the provisions of the existing law, to acquire some of these holdings which we wished them to acquire, and because there were also provisions which would make matters for the settlers easier during the

[Mr. Moore.

initial period of their occupation. For those reasons he begged to move:

That the Committee agrees to the Council's further amendment in clause 9, does not insist upon the Assembly's disagreement to the omission of clauses 10 and 11, and agrees to the new clause in lieu of clause 11.

MR. G. A. JONES (The Gwydir) [8.52] said he wished to offer a very strong objection to the request of the Minister for us to let the bill go through Committee and become law. He was probably just as anxious as the hon. gentleman was to see a very desirable amendment of the existing law passed; but it appeared to him to be a new doctrine for the Minister to ask the Legislative Assembly to take up the attitude he had asked us to take up to-night—to knuckle down on the very vital provisions dealing with private subdivisions, without even having a conference with the Upper House. He thought the least we could have done was to expect the Minister to ask the Legislative Council for a conference, where the hon. gentleman could have put before the members of the other House the arguments he had brought forward to-night; and it appeared to him that if, as the Minister claimed, the hon. gentleman would practically, in another way, achieve almost the whole of the objects the hon. gentleman desired, the members of the Legislative Council ought to be prepared to agree to the provisions going into the bill. It would be a pity to lose the bill; but it did not seem to him that a conference would result in the loss of the bill.

MR. MOORE: It would if we did not agree!

MR. G. A. JONES: It would be time enough to agree then.

MR. MOORE: It would be too late then to agree, because the bill would be gone. I am asking the Committee to do this for the time-being—we are practically placed in that position—and in the meantime we can carry out what we want!

MR. G. A. JONES: I agree with that; but I do not agree with the policy of knuckling down without a final fight.

MR. MOORE: Neither do I!

MR. BROUGHTON: The fight will come later!

Mr. G. A. JONES: It might not come later, or we might not be here to be in it, any way. He could not understand what the Legislative Council meant by the new clause they had substituted for the whole of rejected clause 11—that clause which we desired to see inserted in the bill, as being so valuable in connection with the private subdivision of estates. He was one of those who believed that the private subdivision of estates had not met the full demands of closer settlement as we viewed it from a national standpoint, and it was very necessary that something should be done to see that when private estates were subdivided, they should be subdivided to the benefit of the country, and not to the benefit of land speculators. He had risen for the purpose of expressing his regret that the Minister had not seen his way clear to submit to a conference with the Legislative Council the arguments the hon. gentleman had submitted to the Committee to-night, which appeared to him to be unanswerable. So far as he was personally concerned, he would not agree to accept the amendments of the Legislative Council, because he thought that they would work against the interests of closer settlement, and would not in any way place the advantages of private subdivisions on the footing he thought they ought to be placed upon from a national standpoint. He intended to vote against the proposal of the Minister.

Mr. BURGESS (Burrangong) [8.58] said that, at the present juncture, it was simply beating the air to debate the matter, inasmuch as the Minister was prepared to accept the Legislative Council's amendments, and had a sufficiently large majority behind him to enable him to effect his purpose. When the bill was previously returned by the Legislative Council, with amendments, he objected strongly to the other House mangling the bill, which he believed would otherwise have effected a great deal of good in the way of closer settlement. Undoubtedly clause 11 was an important clause in connection with private subdivisions. To what had the Legislative Council reduced it?

Mr. MOORE: We can put anything we like in the agreement!

Mr. BURGESS said it seemed to him that the Legislative Council were determined to have their own way. They had put up a strenuous fight against the principles of the bill all through. As the Minister was prepared to accept the amendments, he could only offer his protest by speaking as he had done, and recording his vote against the hon. gentleman's proposal.

Question—That the resolution be agreed to—put. The Committee divided:

Ayes, 38; noes, 22; majority, 16.

AYES.

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Arthur, Dr. R. | Levy, D. |
| Ball, R. T. | Mahony, W. H. |
| Barton, C. H. | McFarlane, J. |
| Briner, G. S. | McLaurin, G. R. |
| Broughton, E. C. V. | Millard, W. |
| Brown, W. | Miller, J. |
| Collins, A. E. | Moore, S. W. |
| Davidson, R. | Moxham, T. R. |
| Donaldson, R. T. | Nobbs, J. |
| Downes, P. W. A. | Oakes, C. W. |
| Fallick, J. | Onslow, Col. J. W. M. |
| Fitzpatrick, J. C. L. | Parkes, V. |
| Gilbert, O. | Perry, J. |
| Hindmarsh, G. T. | Price, R. A. |
| Hogue, J. A. | Storey, D. |
| Hunt, J. C. | Waddell, T. |
| James, A. G. F. | |
| Latimer, W. F. | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Lee, C. A. | Lonsdale, E. |
| Levien, R. H. | McCoy, R. W. W. |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Burgess, G. A. | Meehan, J. C. |
| Cann, J. H. | Mercer, J. B. |
| Carmichael, A. C. | Miller, G. T. C. |
| Charlton, M. | Nicholson, J. B. |
| Grahame, W. C. | Page, F. J. |
| Hollis, R. | Peters, H. J. F. |
| Holman, W. A. | Storey, J. |
| Jones, G. A. | Stuart-Robertson, |
| Lynch, J. P. | R. J. |
| MacDonell, D. | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| McGarry, P. | Dacey, J. R. |
| McNeill, J. | Estell, J. |

Question so resolved in the affirmative.
Resolution reported; report adopted.

SEWERAGE SCHEME FOR
VAUCLOSE.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [9.9], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a scheme of sewerage for Vauchuse.

He said: The plans laid upon the table will give hon. members an idea of what

is proposed by this scheme. The estimated cost of the full scheme is £83,000. The estimated cost of the portion first intended to be carried out is £24,000. The Vacluse council urge that the scheme be carried out. The scheme has one outfall, situated south of the lighthouse, discharging into the ocean at spring tide level, and includes nearly the whole of Vacluse municipality. The main sewer is carried from the outfall to Parsley Bay in deep rock tunnel (3 ft. 3 in. x 2 ft. 2 in). With regard to the northern system, first portion proposed, the branch to Watson's Bay tunnels to the harbour foreshores at the north end of Palmerston-street, terminating at Clovelly-street, where the rising main from Camp Cove Park enters. From Hay-street northwards to the Military Reserve is a low-level area; the main intercepting sewer flows northwards to a pumping-station in Camp Cove Park, which is the lowest ground in the vicinity. From Parsley Bay, now a Crown reserve, a branch to Vacluse Bay intercepts the sewage from that area as well as from the west side of Parsley Bay, which is already freely built upon. This is proposed for future extension, and will embrace the major portion of Vacluse municipality lying to the southward of Chapel and Vacluse roads, and will comprise a main intercepting sewer partly in rock tunnel, starting from the Parsley Bay sewer, and heading to near Hermit Point. To this sewer the area of Vacluse to the east will gravitate, also all the high-level to west near Shark Bay and Vacluse Bay. The low-level areas around these two bays will be lifted to gravitate to intercepting sewer by pumping-stations, one on each area. On the £24,000 expenditure it would be necessary to levy a rate of 1s. 5½d. in the £ on the assessed annual value for interest and upkeep. The present rate collected throughout the metropolitan area by the Water Supply and Sewerage Board is 9½d. in the £. On this basis there would be an annual loss of £559 on the first portion under present circumstances. It must be borne in mind, however, that the district is being rapidly settled, the applications to the council for permits to build representing three a fortnight. At present there is a sanitary rate equal to 26s. per an-

[Mr. C. A. Lee.

num per house. The reference is for a general system to include the whole of Vacluse at a cost of £83,000. But it is only proposed in the first instance to carry out the portion I have described at a cost of £24,000, and, as the borough fills up, and the finances of the municipality are strong enough to undertake the main portions of the scheme, that can be carried out at any time. There has been a very great demand for this scheme for many years. It has been the subject of many references to the Public Works Department, and considerable time has been occupied in working out the system in a manner which would give what is so necessary in works of this kind, situated as this district is, namely, a proper outfall to the sea. It does away entirely with all septic treatment, and the district will be afforded as perfect a system as that of any portion of the existing sewerage district. The municipality having gone into the matter very closely, and satisfied themselves that their financial position will enable them to bear the annual cost of upkeep and interest, I am justified in submitting the work to the House with a view to its reference to the Public Works Committee for inquiry.

Question proposed.

Mr. McGOWEN (Redfern) [9.14]: I notice that there are two or three proposals of this kind in the metropolitan district; and I would like to know what the Minister is going to do in view of the fact that we are now face to face with the prospect of an insufficient water supply for the metropolitan district. Hon. members are aware that when the Prospect Dam was constructed we were supposed to have a water supply sufficient for fifty years, and only a few years ago, when we decided upon the construction of the Cataract Dam, we were told that that work would meet the requirements of Sydney for the next sixty or seventy years. In view of these proposals for sewerage works, involving a considerable additional strain upon the water supply, I should like to know from the Minister whether he intends to propose a scheme for augmenting the storage for the metropolitan district. I am not objecting to this proposal. I think that Vacluse has a right to a

sewerage system as well as Botany, but I am pointing out that these additional sewerage systems will increase the strain upon the metropolitan water supply, and it may be necessary to take steps to supplement the main storage.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

NORTH BOTANY AND BOTANY SEWERAGE.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [9.17], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a scheme of sewerage for Botany and North Botany.

He said: The estimated cost of this work, including land resumption, is £72,800. The proposal deals with what are known as districts Nos. 3 and 4 respectively. Local agitation for the carrying out of this scheme, which will be vested in the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage upon completion, has been very strong for a considerable time. Following on representation in 1906, investigations were made, the result being that the North Botany council were informed that the question would have to be considered in connection with the ocean outfall for the western, southern, and Illawarra districts. This latter work having been authorised, the scheme at present under consideration has been formulated. Pending the completion of the ocean outfall works, the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage have stated that the sewage can be treated on the sewage farm. The detailed estimate and financial aspect are as follows:—No. 3 district—Completed scheme, including pumping-station, machinery, rising main, main sewers and reticulation, and 10 per cent. for engineering and contingencies, £47,000; No. 4 district—Completed scheme, including pumping-station, machinery, rising main, main sewers and reticulation, and 10 per cent. for engineering and contingencies, £22,100. Electric cable and connections—Quotation from Railway Commissioners, £735; interest during construction, allow £2,465; land resumption (Mr. Fleming's estimate), £500: total, £72,800. Allowing 5 per cent. to cover working ex-

penses, interest, &c., the annual cost for complete scheme for districts Nos. 3 and 4 is £3,640 per annum. A rate of 1s. 11d. in the £ on £38,000, the assessed annual ratable value of property within the sewered area, as given by the Botany and North Botany councils, would return £3,642. The rate charged by the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage in the metropolitan area is 9½d. in the £. Botany and North Botany for many years have been the centre of very large factories of all kinds. Most of them require a large supply of water. There is considerable waste—not only of the effluent, but also waste material that has to pass away from these factories. The condition of affairs to-day is just about as bad as it can be, and it would not be possible to cope with the difficulties unless we carry out a complete system such as is now proposed.

Mr. MCGOWEN: Is the outfall that was sanctioned last year completed?

Mr. C. A. LEE: No.

Mr. MCGOWEN: What is the good of this until you have that work completed?

Mr. C. A. LEE: This work will take considerable time. The inquiry has to be made, and assuming that the report is favourable, it will probably be eighteen months before we can start, and it will take two years to carry out the work. We must get the thing started in time, while the outfall sewer is being constructed.

Mr. MCGOWEN: How long will it be before the outfall is completed?

Mr. C. A. LEE: My object is to carry out both works, so that the outfall will be ready by the time the sewerage of Botany and North Botany is carried out. If I waited until the outfall was completed, it would be years before we could deal with the sewage of North Botany. This hive of industry is very largely on the increase. I have been informed by the various councils over and over again that if a proper system of sewage were given to the district there would be considerably more industries centred there than we have to-day. There is a large number now, and it is not likely that they will be moved. The probability is that they will be very largely increased. The Water and Sewerage

Board say that the sewage from North Botany could be treated at the Botany farm. Possibly it could; but we cannot get away from the fact that the Botany farm to-day is an evil. The effluvium from that place is at times unbearable. The increase of population in the western suburbs is so rapid that the demand upon the sewage farm has increased enormously. If, in addition, we place the sewage from North Botany on the farm, I fear the position of affairs will be such that it will be very detrimental to the public health, and the nuisance that exists to-day will become intensified. Whatever merit was in the Botany farm years ago, it is absolutely surcharged to-day. The Water and Sewerage Board has done a good deal to overcome the difficulty; but do what it will, it cannot overcome the present trouble. It would be folly to attempt to sewer the great district of Botany and North Botany, unless we saw our way clear to finally and effectively dispose of the matter that has to be carried. Although this proposal was pressed very strongly upon me years ago, I had to tell the residents, reluctantly, that I could not move until the outfall sewer was sanctioned. That sewer was sanctioned last year. It will soon be constructed, and it is intended to put these works in hand, so that when the outfall is ready these works can be connected, and then we will be able to give Botany district as complete a sewerage system as any now existing. I do not know of any better plan that could be adopted. The representatives of the district can now see what a difficulty I have had hitherto in dealing with this subject. I dared not attempt to sewer Botany and put the sewage on the Botany farm. I am now dealing with the matter in such a way that within a reasonable time the whole system can be carried out in a complete and perfect manner. I admit this sewerage has been urgently required. I do not know any suburb that more urgently requires an efficient system of sewerage.

Mr. PAGE: Does the hon. member think that the outfall sewer will be finished in two and a half years?

Mr. C. A. LEE: That is what I am informed; and this work should be carried on so as to dovetail with it. I feel

certain it will lead to a very great improvement in the Botany district. As a residential centre, it is very much avoided to-day, and I do not wonder at that, because those industries cannot be carried on under present conditions without being more or less disagreeable to the residents. I feel satisfied that this will not only meet the requirements of public health, but it will also be eminently successful from a financial point of view.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

WAGGA WAGGA SEWERAGE SCHEME.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [9.29], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a scheme of sewerage for the municipality of Wagga Wagga.

He said: It is a long jump from Botany to Wagga Wagga, but in this case, as in the other, there is great urgency. I have been urged very strongly by the local bodies to proceed with this work, and they have given me very strong reasons in its favour. The usual map is here for the information of hon. members. The total estimated cost of the work is £41,000. The night-soil is at present collected in closed pans, and removed to a dépôt situated north of Travers-street, where it is buried. All slop-water is disposed of on the premises, and is either thrown out over the surface of the back yard, or is passed into cesspits, and percolates into the drift. In the case of the drift under Old Wagga, the pollution of the drift must also result in the pollution of the river. The extent of the pollution cannot, however, be estimated, as some purification takes place in the passage of the polluted water through the drift. That there is grave danger from a continuance of the present state of things is shown by the following table of the cases of typhoid that have occurred in recent years:—1898, 26 cases; 1899, 29 cases; 1900, 62 cases; 1901, 14 cases; 1902, 33 cases; 1903, 37 cases; 1904, 25 cases; 1905, 100 cases; 1906, 71 cases; 1907, 43 cases; 1908, 69

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cases; 1909, 82 cases. Those figures show that there is something radically wrong in the sanitary system.

Mr. MEEHAN: How many of those cases were fatal?

Mr. C. A. LEE: I cannot say.

Mr. NIELSEN: A goodly number of them were fatal!

Mr. C. A. LEE: The maintenance of the purity of the water of the Murrumbidgee, which is the source of water supply of many station-holders, settlers, and several towns below Wagga, renders the interception of impurities from sewage most important. The population of the town has increased rapidly during the present decade. In 1900 it was 5,100; in 1907 it had increased to 5,720; and is now estimated at over 6,000. The works proposed are divided into four districts. District No. 1 is more thickly populated, and the sewerage of this area, together with the construction of the pumping-station, rising main, and treatment works, could be carried out for a sum the interest and capital on which could be covered by a moderate rate. It is intended, therefore, that the sewerage of District No. 1 be proceeded with, and that the sewerage be afterwards extended to districts 2, 3, and 4, as the town extends, and the areas are built over.

Mr. NIELSEN: Is it proposed to do anything with that lagoon that runs through the town?

Mr. C. A. LEE: I should imagine that what happens in other cases in which watercourses run through towns, happens at Wagga. The impurities find their way into the lagoon, which practically becomes a cesspool. If you prevent those impurities from finding their way there, you get rid of the difficulty. The council have, in accordance with this arrangement, furnished the necessary resolution to cover district No. 1, the estimated cost of which is £27,500. The No. 1 district scheme will provide for 970 houses out of a total of 1,190, and will include the provision of main and reticulation sewers, pumping-station and plant, septic tanks, filter beds, &c., for treatment purposes, the design being of such a character as to permit of expansion to meet future needs. The financial aspect is as follows:—Annual cost—No. 1 scheme—

No. 1 district only:—1. Annual payment to cover interest and sinking fund on £25,700 for sixty years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., £900. 2. Renewal fund to replace perishable portions of scheme, £1,600 in twenty years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. equals 3.5361 per cent. per annum, £57. 3. Maintenance, £493. 4. Fuel—gas, £209. Estimated annual cost, £1,659. A rate of 1s. 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the £ on the ratable value of property (£32,979) in the area to be served will return £1,666 per annum. Annual cost:—No. 1 scheme (complete)—4 districts:—1. Annual payment to cover interest and sinking fund on £41,000 for sixty years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., £1,644. 2. Renewal fund to replace perishable portions of scheme, £3,650 in twenty years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. equals 3.5361 per cent. per annum, £130. 3. Maintenance, £687. 4. Fuel—gas, say, £480. Estimated annual cost, £2,941. A rate of 1s. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on the ratable value of property (£38,166) in the area to be sewered will return £2,940 per annum. If the whole of the work were carried out now, the rate to make the scheme a financial one would have to be 1s. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £; but inasmuch as it is proposed to carry out that portion only which serves the most thickly-populated part, covering some 900 houses, the rate will be 1s. 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., and the cost is brought within a reasonable amount, and will be no burden on anybody. As the other parts increase in population, the work will be carried out and a much larger revenue will be derived than could be got from those parts now. It will be seen, therefore, that district No. 1 on the work intended to be carried out forthwith will give more than a full return from the inception on a rate of 1s. 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. The remaining portions are to stand over until the increase in population warrants their being carried out. It is considered, however, that the full scheme should form the subject of reference at the one time. Wagga is one of our important country towns, and is bound to grow. The present sanitary system is inadequate, and is a menace to the public health. The town is sufficiently wealthy to bear the cost of this sewerage scheme, and the municipal council are not only prepared to undertake the obligation proposed to be imposed upon them, but are pressing the

Government very strongly to have the proposal referred to the Public Works Committee without delay.

Question proposed.

Mr. NIELSEN (Yass) [9.38]: While I agree with the Minister that the town of Wagga should have a sewerage system, I am of opinion that no system of sewerage will be complete without the drainage of that lagoon which runs through the town. I believe that the majority of cases of typhoid that have occurred there have arisen from the stagnant water in that lagoon, which is in the middle of the most populous part of the town. There is a depression, which is filled with water through the water being backed up when the river is in flood, and when the river goes down the water cannot get back from the lagoon into the river. Any system of sewerage from the town should be accompanied by the drainage of that lagoon in such a way as to get rid of that very large quantity of stagnant water. I do not know whether this scheme will get rid of that stagnant water. I do not believe it will, and I ask the Minister to request the Public Works Committee to make inquiry as to the necessity for draining that lagoon, which is the greatest menace to the health of the people of Wagga that exists there to-day. The Minister suggests that it is primarily caused by the fact that the drainage that will go into the sewerage system which he proposes, goes now to a large extent into this lagoon. I am prepared to admit that that may be so, but the Minister will agree that the water impounded in the lagoon must always be a menace to public health. I believe the sewerage scheme will assist to some extent in getting rid of the causes of typhoid epidemics, but the public health would be more effectually safeguarded if, in connection with the sewerage scheme, provision were made for doing away with that large sheet of stagnant water.

Mr. McGARRY (The Murrumbidgee) [9.42]: The hon. member for Yass may be quite right in assuming that the lagoon is a menace to health, but the local board of health and the members of the medical faculty have on different occasions expressed the opinion that the typhoid trouble that has occurred so fre-

quently in Wagga does not arise from the lagoon. The town is situated on a flat, and the household drainage lying on the surface is operated on by the sun in such a way that it not only creates a nuisance, but also breeds the germs of epidemic diseases. Possibly something will have to be done so far as the lagoon is concerned, but whatever work is undertaken in that connection will have to be arranged for entirely apart from a scheme for the disposal of sewage. It may be found necessary to cut a short canal to permit of the water draining from the lagoon into the river, or it may be considered preferable to fill up the depression. But no work of that kind is involved in the present proposal, which I trust will be allowed to go before the Public Works Committee without delay. The work is of an urgent character, on account of the deplorable number of deaths of fine young men and women that have been caused by typhoid and similar diseases during the last four or five years.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

MANNING RIVER HARBOUR WORKS.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [9.45], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of a scheme for the completion of the harbour works at the entrance to the Manning River.

He said: The estimated cost of the works is £150,000. In 1889 Sir John Coode reported on what he styled "this important and peculiarly difficult case," and recommended the following:—South breakwater, 4,000 feet in length, estimated to cost £118,200; north training-bank, 2,300 feet in length, £7,400; barrier-bank to South Spit, 6,700 feet in length, £8,630; north breakwater, 2,200 feet in length, £57,700; leading lights, buoys and lighting channel, £2,000; total, £193,930; or, say, £194,000; the first work to be put in hand to be the southern breakwater. In 1894, on the recommendation of Mr. C. W. Darley, a tender was accepted for the construction of the north training-wall; and up to the 31st December, 1897, £23,020 had been expended in

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the construction of 3,287 feet of walling. A scheme was then prepared by Mr. Darley, and submitted to the Public Works Committee. It was, to some extent, similar to that proposed by Sir John Coode, the difference being the addition of a river-wall extending up-stream from the north training-wall, and the omission of the wave-trap at the northern side of the entrance. The total length of the breakwaters, training-walls, &c., in this scheme was 25,000 feet, and the estimated cost £222,500, in addition to the work already done. The committee recommended the construction of the following works, at a cost of £110,000: 1. Extension of western wall, 9,000 feet. 2. Construction of north breakwater, 950 feet. 3. Construction of south breakwater, 2,600 feet. 4. Construction of barrier-bank and facing south side, 10,000 feet. An act (No. 7 of 1899) was subsequently passed, and the work of construction was carried on until February, 1904, when all work was suspended, and the plant stored. Prior to the act, an amount of £23,020 was expended; and of the £110,000 authorised by the act, an amount of £79,141 has been expended. During the progress of the work, it was considered desirable to modify the Public Works Committee's recommendation and extend the north breakwater 890 feet beyond the authorised limit, or to within 210 feet of its ultimate termination under Sir John Coode's plan. The unexpended balance of £30,859 will be insufficient to extend the southern breakwater to the point authorised, or, indeed, to any point that would give beneficial results. The experience since work ceased shows that, with the works as constructed, navigation is still carried on under certain disabilities. These arise from three causes, namely, the conditions which obtain from time to time on the bar, in the channel alongside the northern breakwater, and the crossing inside the entrance. It is clear that no permanent improvement can be effected to the bar and crossing by dredging, and that the entrance presents less favourable conditions than any other on the coast for even the maintenance of a temporary depth by that means. The average annual expenditure on dredging operations for the last eight years amounts to

£2,500, which sum, if capitalised at 3½ per cent., would be equal to a capital expenditure of about £70,000. The late Chief Engineer and the present Chief Engineer have conferred on the matter, and it is considered that with the completion of the works generally on the lines laid down by Sir John Coode, improvement of a permanent character will be effected at this entrance. I am bound to admit that our northern river entrances have presented great conundrums to our engineers for many years past. So far as the works have been carried out at the entrance to the Manning River, they have not, up to the present time, given any relief whatever. The northern breakwater has been extended; but, there being no headland on the south, a huge bed of sand has been formed, with the consequence that at every tide large bodies of sand are carried into the river. On occasions, the entrance is so badly blocked that it is almost impossible for craft of any size to pass in and out.

MR. CANN: Is it expected that the construction of the southern breakwater will result in a scour?

MR. C. A. LEE: Yes; it is expected that, first of all, the southern breakwater will intercept the sand coming in from the southern side; and that, in the second place, it will confine the channel between the two breakwaters, and set up a scour that will keep the channel clear for navigation purposes. The importance of this river entrance has increased very considerably of late years. Notwithstanding the construction of the North Coast railway, there will always be a very large trade on the Manning River, because there is not only settlement on the river-banks, but for some distance on the land lying back. It is calculated that some of the revenue on the North Coast railway will be obtained by picking up intermediate trade and bringing it to the various rivers for exportation. It was never contemplated that the whole of the revenue of the North Coast railway would be derived from through traffic. There is a class of traffic—timber, maize, and things of that kind—which will be brought, to a very large extent, to the head of navigation; and when the river Manning is navigable for ocean-going

boats as far as Taree, and above that to Wingham, it will always be convenient for transhipment from the railway to the boats. At all events, the justification for this proposal is, that the district is a large and growing one, and there will always be a necessity for maintaining a proper system of navigation to and from the river. The northern rivers rank in this way. There is the Clarence and the Richmond, and the Manning comes third. It is rapidly growing in importance, but it has the worst entrance of the whole lot. I do not profess to be an engineer, and am guided very largely, of course, by the engineering staff; but, in view of what I have seen done during the last thirty odd years in the various rivers of the state, and having at different times seen the work that has been carried out at the Manning, and knowing the position of the bar and the crossing there at the present time, I am satisfied that it will be useless ever to expect to keep up a proper depth of water, under all conditions, by a system of dredging, so long as we have the northern break-water only.

Mr. CANN: And if the hon. member did, it would be a competitor against the North Coast railway!

Mr. C. A. LEE: No. I explained just now that, in estimating the revenue for the North Coast railway, it very largely depended on a heavy class of goods that will be conveyed by rail to the rivers, and then be exported by steamers. That class of traffic was never calculated upon as being brought right through by train. It is well known that the timber, maize, and other heavy traffic on the northern rivers is very large to-day, and must of necessity be very much larger in the future. Population is increasing very rapidly; there is a lot of back country which has never been touched at all which will be tapped by the railway, and stuff will be brought to the rivers for exportation. However, the justification for the expenditure of this considerable amount of money, in my judgment, consists in the fact that unless the southern break-water is carried out, it would be perfectly useless to ever expect to maintain anything like a safe or reasonable depth of water for the ordinary ocean-going boats; but if the southern breakwater is carried

out, and the objects aimed at are attained—and I believe they will be, if not to a maximum extent, to a very large extent indeed—it follows that a larger class of boat will be able to enter the river. This is one of those cases which have been the subject of very adverse comment in this country for very many years, both by the metropolitan press, the steamer companies, and the residents themselves, and there has been a universal demand on the part of all parties concerned for this particular work to be carried out. It will be for the Public Works Committee, after obtaining all the information in detail, and calling all the expert evidence they may desire in connection with the matter, to finally decide the question; but, in my judgment, the work is a desirable one, and, that being the case, I have no hesitation whatever in asking the House to refer it to the Public Works Committee.

Question proposed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Belmore) [9.56]: I like the optimistic way in which the Minister addressed himself to this question; but the hon. member is candid enough to tell us that this is still the worst bar-harbour on the coast. That is absolutely true. In spite of all the money that has been spent upon it, the Manning River is the most dangerous bar-harbour in New South Wales. I went into that bar-harbour on one occasion, and we had to keep within 6 inches of a training-wall on one side and of a sandbank on the other. I would not for £50,000 make the same voyage again. However, that will not prevent me from supporting this proposal, because I am not one of those who think that the North Coast railway is going to do everything for the North Coast district. We shall still have to keep the bar-harbours open, and, for that reason, I think the Minister is right in bringing forward this proposal. A little while ago I had the advantage of going along the coast on a pilot steamer to visit the lighthouses and bar-harbours, and when they offered to take me inside the Manning bar I said, "No; not for £50,000 will you get me to go into that bar-harbour again." I want to emphasise one point. Although it is a very dangerous bar-harbour, there is no reason

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why we cannot improve it, and the construction of this southern breakwater will certainly do a great deal to make it a safer harbour than it is to-day. That will be a glorious thing for all the farmers and settlers who live between the proposed railway line and the coast. They are a class of people to whom we owe an enormous debt. When we come to remember what they have done on the North and South Coasts, we can hardly repay that debt; and when we know that their whole business depends on their getting a quick access to market, it is our duty to give it to them by keeping the river entrance open, instead of allowing steamers with perishable goods to lie two or three weeks inside the bar. If the construction of this breakwater will tend to do that, as I think it will, I have no hesitation in giving the Minister my strongest support.

Mr. BEEBY (Blayney) [9.58]: I rise to strongly oppose the reference of this matter to the Public Works Committee. It has already been said that a large sum of money has been spent in attempts to make an entrance to this particular river, and, although I believe nearly £200,000 have been expended in this direction without doing much to improve the conditions that obtain there, it is proposed now to submit to the Public Works Committee the possible expenditure of £150,000 more, without any guarantee that the expenditure of that money will remove the obstacles to navigation. The Minister himself admits that the possible result of the expenditure of this money is entirely problematical. It may or may not have the desired result. In matters of this kind, the House is entitled to have some absolute guarantee that the proposed expenditure of a large sum like this will at least achieve the result in view.

Mr. PRICE: ———

Mr. BEEBY: I understand that my hon. friend is interested in this proposal because he represents either this or the adjoining electorate, and if it were absolutely useless, no doubt he would raise his voice in favour of it. But there are considerations outside the hon. member's electorate, and where we are disposing of a limited amount of money for the carrying out of public

works, it should at least be expended on ventures in which success is absolutely guaranteed from the outset. There is no guarantee that this money, if expended, will achieve the end in view. The possibilities are, in view of our experience of the northern rivers, that when this money has been expended, another effort will be made, and probably a further expenditure will be asked for. There is no denying that large sums of money have been spent on these northern rivers, and that the money, so far as revenue is concerned, is absolutely unproductive. Suppose the Public Works Committee recommend this scheme, and £150,000 is expended, it will be an absolute dead loss to the community. We reap no harbour dues. One large company, which has absolute control of the northern rivers, gets the financial benefit of the traffic, and pays nothing at all to the state for this huge expenditure of public money.

Mr. PRICE: There are sixteen companies running!

Mr. BEEBY: There may be a slight advantage to the few, but so far as the community as a whole is concerned, the expenditure of huge sums on works that are unproductive, and which puts large profits into the pockets of those who are running the ships, should give way to matters of more urgent importance where better results can be achieved for the community as a whole. I was astonished at the admission that the North Coast railway, upon which we are expending some three millions of money, is not going to bring traffic from the northern rivers. I understood that the object of that project was to give the coastal producers a cheap means of getting their produce to market. Now we are told the object of that line is to feed the rivers, and to give to a particular company the right to handle produce from that district. If that is so, then the position many of us took up, that the expenditure of that large sum of money was not justified, is borne out.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member should not display the intensity of his ignorance!

Mr. BEEBY: My main objections to the proposal are, first of all, that there

is no guarantee that the money, if expended, will achieve the end in view; secondly, that the money will be absolutely unproductive; and thirdly, that the money can be, and should be, expended on works of a more urgent character, which will lead to the development of the state, and which will guarantee a substantial return from the out-set.

Mr. NIELSEN (Yass) [10.4]: To a very large extent I hold the same views as the hon. member for Blayney with regard to this matter. Before we send a proposal of this description to the Public Works Committee, we should have some guarantee from the engineers that success will follow if the work is carried out. There is no such suggestion in this case. It is simply an experiment we are trying for the benefit of the people living in the district. I do not suggest that the settlers on the northern rivers should be neglected. Although those settlers have the best part of the state, they are, so far as the public of New South Wales are concerned, the most costly settlers we have. A short time ago we passed a very large public work to suit the northern river people—I refer to the North Coast railway. On the top of that we have every member representing a North Coast district pointing out the necessity for undertaking works of this character for the benefit of his district.

Mr. PRICE: Why did not the hon. member say that when he was addressing the people recently?

Mr. NIELSEN: At any rate, I told no lies when I was there.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member told the truth by accident, then!

Mr. NIELSEN: I will tell the hon. member something he will not like. I am exercising my right in this House, and the hon. member will not do anything which will shorten my speech one inch. I was pointing out that these northern river settlers are the most expensive we have, inasmuch as we are asked every session of Parliament to pass some enormous work for the benefit of the rivers. I do not suggest that these people should not get a fair deal; but when a proposal of this description is put forward, which will cost the

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country £150,000, we are, at any rate, entitled to ask that those who will immediately benefit from the expenditure shall pay interest upon the cost of construction. We carry out gigantic harbour works on all these different rivers, and we do not ask the settlers to pay a single penny either towards meeting the capital cost or to pay interest on construction. Sydney is the only harbour which pays for the work which is done. Looking at the map of the Manning River, it will be seen that the depth of water over a large area of the mouth does not exceed 1 fathom. I do not know whether it would be possible to improve the entrance, and make it trafficable for steamers of a reasonable size. I do not know whether, as the result of the proposed work, it would be possible to increase the depth of water to 12 or 14 feet—the Minister has given us no information on that point. All that the hon. gentleman says is, that something is necessary. I am prepared to admit that it may be; but that is no reason why the public should put their hands in their pockets to the extent of £150,000 for the improvement of the entrance to the river, when there is no suggestion that if the work is completed, and is successful, any of the steamers trading there will be called upon to pay a penny towards the capital cost or interest on the cost of construction. If we continue to carry out works of this description, we shall soon find ourselves in a condition of insolvency. Before a proposal of this description is submitted to the Public Works Committee, we are entitled to have more information than has been furnished; and at any rate we should have a guarantee from the engineers that there is going to be some return for the money expended. I believe if we had engineers who understood this class of work properly, they could submit, in a proposal of this kind, a reasonable guarantee that some good would result from the carrying out of these enormous works, which Parliament is asked to authorise from time to time. Every one of these works is submitted in the nature of an experiment. When the northern breakwater at the Manning was proposed, we were, no

doubt, told that it would have the effect of improving the entrance to the river; and now the Minister admits that it has had no such effect. He tells us that the northern breakwater is of no value whatever without the construction of the southern breakwater, to cause a scour. Not being an engineer, I cannot say anything about that. But when large expense is proposed for the benefit of a few people in a limited area, we should have some guarantee that there will be a sufficient return to cover the interest on the cost of construction.

Mr. MCGOWEN (Redfern) [10.12]: The statement made by the hon. member for Blayney and the hon. member for Yass in regard to the set of circumstances prevailing on our northern rivers is absolutely true. We have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on each of the northern rivers, and there is hardly one of them that you can say is a safe river entrance to-day. Except on very few of these rivers, the dredges have to be kept going. It is said by the engineers that years ago we obtained a report from a celebrated engineer, named Sir John Coode, who submitted a scheme embracing every one of these river entrances, and involving about three times the amount of money we have spent upon them. On the Clarence I do not believe we have spent anything like the amount of money Sir John Coode recommended; but I do not know whether this is so on the Richmond. In every experiment we have so far made with Sir John Coode's proposals, we have simply taken them piecemeal. As in the case of Newcastle, so have we done in the other rivers—we have erected one breakwater. We do not give the scheme of Sir John Coode a fair trial. We have carried out one breakwater, and the residents on the different rivers turn round and say, "You have carried out the wrong breakwater." If there is a wrong breakwater on any of these northern rivers, it is the breakwater on the Manning. The northern breakwater is the work that is being constructed, and the sand comes in from the south. The bar is exactly in the position described by the hon. member for Yass. There is a mass of floating sand and a shifting

bar, which makes the expenditure of money on the northern side an absolute waste. We recognise that we have either to give up the schemes of Sir John Coode, on which we have spent millions of money, or try one of them in its entirety. We have to see how far the bar will be affected by the construction of the two breakwaters. We have to realise that there is settlement on the northern rivers which the railway will not touch. I admit there is a monopoly there; I admit that this is an expenditure that brings us no return. But this is only a reference to the Public Works Committee; and if we can carry out the scheme of Sir John Coode in every particular, it ought to be done by the construction of two breakwaters. Therefore let the Public Works Committee report on this point, because the Manning is the river involving the cheapest breakwater that could be referred to the Public Works Committee.

Mr. MACDONELL (Cobar). [10.15]: I confess I do not altogether agree with the leader of the Opposition. I do not think that if there is a proposal to which there are objections, we should send it forward to the Public Works Committee. I am one of those who agree entirely with the view put forward by the hon. member for Yass, that an altogether unreasonably large amount of public money has been spent on this North Coast country. In early years so much was not done there; but of late years, especially since this and the last Government discovered a certain number of supporters there, and since the present Minister and our hon. friend, the member for The Clarence, and a few others have seen their way to support this Government, money has been squandered on the northern rivers in a manner never done before. We are going to spend £3,000,000 on a railway, and we are spending infinitely more money on the entrances to the northern rivers. It is no use sending a work to the Public Works Committee unless there is some reasonable chance of the committee recommending it, and Parliament later on sanctioning it. The money can be infinitely better expended than on an experiment of this character. The men who have drawn the contour plans and

looked into the question do not come forward and stake their reputation that this work is going to be a success; yet we are coolly asked to throw away £150,000 in what, after all, is an experiment. How different is the position in other parts of the state! There was a railway wanted to Nymagee —

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MACDONELL: I am dealing with a question affecting the public funds, and how the public funds are proposed to be expended, and I am entitled to say that this money may be infinitely better expended on a line to Nymagee than in this particular way. I may say, incidentally, that while I am not blaming the Minister in regard to it, it is an unfair thing that the Government should take the view in regard to certain works that they should not be undertaken without a guarantee that there shall be no loss to the state; that any loss will have to be made up by private individuals, as in the case of the railway I refer to; and at the same time we should be asked to spend £150,000, which is more than would build the railway to Nymagee, without requiring a guarantee from anybody, and when the engineers who come forward with the scheme are not prepared to stake their reputation that it is going to be a success. If we spent this £150,000 in building a line of railway, we would know that the railway would be run all right; but here, after we spend £150,000, we have no guarantee that we might not just as well have thrown it into the sea.

Mr. MCGOWEN: There have been wrecks, and lives have been lost, at the Manning!

Mr. MACDONELL: There have been wrecks elsewhere. The *Waratah* has been lost, with hundreds of souls, and people who go to sea know that they run that risk. At Cobar in one year about forty people died from typhoid, and those lives might have been saved if money had been spent on water supply and drainage. More lives have been lost through bad water supply and drainage than have ever been lost on the North Coast. The Minister should call a halt, as far as the North Coast is concerned. No doubt many of the works he has submitted were justified, but I am sorry

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he has not given a shilling to the western division. He will not build a railway out there without getting a guarantee; but a railway is to be made in the electorate of the Colonial Secretary which will involve a loss of £15,000 a year, and no guarantee is asked for.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

GRAFTON AND SOUTH GRAFTON WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [10.23], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a scheme of water supply from the Nymboida River for the municipalities of Grafton and South Grafton.

He said: The estimated cost of this work is £68,000. The repayment is on a fifty years' basis. The two councils concerned have urged repeatedly that the scheme be inquired into. The present population to be served is 5,500, and the estimated future population to be served by the reticulation is 8,000. It is intended to build a rubble dam across the Nymboida, which has an abundant flow, to form a pipe-head basin. The water will be taken by a gravitation main for a distance of 19 miles, 30 chains of which will be through tunnels, to an excavated service reservoir 85 feet in diameter, with a capacity of 600,000 gallons. From this reservoir provision is made for a service main and the reticulation services. Allowing for a maximum consumption of 50 gallons per head, water for railway purposes, &c., the consumption on the basis of present population is put down at 329,000 gallons per day, and 500,000 for future population; while for an average consumption of 40 gallons per head the figures would be 274,000 gallons present population, and 420,000 gallons future. The financial aspect may be put in this form: (1) Annual repayment to cover interest and sinking fund on £68,000 for fifty years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., 4.2634 per cent. per annum, £2,899; (2) renewal fund to cover cost of replacing steel mains and fencing, £40,650, after twenty-five years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., 2,5674

per cent. per annum, £1,044; (3) wages of turncock, salaries of assessors and auditors, and proportion of town clerk's salary, £190; (4) repairs and maintenance, allow £67; total, £4,200. The life of twenty-five years assumed for the steel mains is considered to be reasonable for pipes protected as proposed. The life of the cast-iron pipes and service reservoir has been taken as exceeding the fifty-year period during which repayments are to be made to the Government. It has been pointed out that a rate of 2s. in the £ on the ratable value of properties to be served would produce £3,400 per annum, added to which there would be the amounts from the sale of water for railway and commercial purposes. It is proposed to serve the two large towns of Grafton and South Grafton by giving them a gravitation service, with a constant flow of water in all seasons. The proposal would give the two Graftons an abundant supply of water, which they require, and have not got at present. Being in a warm climate, the necessities of the people are very much greater than they would be on the uplands, and there is no other means by which we could give them a constant and abundant supply by gravitation, except by taking it from this particular place. Preliminary surveys and thorough investigation have been made. The whole question has been submitted to the respective councils. They have thrashed it out, and they have accepted it, and are prepared to finance it under the Country Towns Water and Sewerage Act. If the work be sanctioned, it will necessarily take some time to carry out, because the water has to be carried by gravitation for a distance of 19 miles, and a rubble dam will have to be constructed. Involved in this scheme is the question of a perfect sewerage scheme, and unless they get this water supply it will be impossible to give the large city of Grafton and the municipality of South Grafton the services that are necessary to protect and maintain a large population within their boundaries. They have been tinkering with a small supply and a very inadequate one, and the cost of maintenance is considerably more than it should be. That will continue to be the case until they get a reliable supply from

this source. In the Nymboida River a supply of the very best water can be obtained, and by putting up an inexpensive dam, water can be obtained sufficient to supply in all seasons a population of 8,000 people, with the very large consumption of 40 gallons per diem per head of men, women, and children. The engineers estimate that this can be done at the moderate cost stated, and the municipalities are willing to pay for it. It is one of these necessary works which the country is justified in sending on to the Public Works Committee for investigation.

Mr. G. A. JONES: Is it estimated that there will be a loss of £1,000 per annum?

Mr. C. A. LEE: That estimate does not take into account the revenue that will be derived from sales to the Railway Department, and sales by meter for commercial purposes. I have no doubt as to the soundness of the financial position.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

JUNEE WATER SUPPLY SCHEME.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [10.33], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a scheme of water supply for the municipality of Juneé.

He said: This is a matter of concern, not only to the residents of the town of Juneé, but in connection with our railway system. Juneé is a very large railway dépôt, and it is essential that there should be a supply of water there for railway purposes. It was contemplated when the existing works were carried out that the needs of the railway in this respect would be met; but that has been found not to be the case, and it has cost the Railway Department an enormous sum of money to convey water from Wagga and other places for railway purposes. The estimated cost of the work is £60,714, and repayment is to be made on a fifty years' basis. The council has urged that the scheme be inquired into. The present population of the town is about 2,500, but a large quantity of water will be required for

railway purposes, the Railway Department having agreed to pay £3,000 per annum for a full and unlimited supply. The existing dam is situated on Ulan-derie Creek, with a storage capacity of 140,000,000 gallons. The service reservoir is of 353,000 gallons' capacity, and there are reticulation mains for town and railway yards. The scheme cost £52,483 12s. 3d., of which £10,483 12s. was written off, and the debt now stands at £42,000. The works were completed in 1897. They cannot be said to have been at all successful, principally on account of the absorbent nature of the catchment area preventing anything but heavy downpours from contributing to the storage. For four years after construction there was insufficient water available for even a temporary supply, and since 1901 the dam has only been filled on two or three occasions. The result has been that the storage has been contaminated by vegetable growth, and rendered unfit for domestic use. The water has been used mostly for railway purposes, and as far as municipal requirements are concerned, for garden and slopping uses only. The receipts from the sales to the Railway Commissioners, at 1s. 6d. per thousand gallons, have been sufficient to defray the instalments due for interest and sinking fund on the original debt until lately, but the storage has again practically given out. The council's financial position in relation to the existing scheme is as follows:—The instalment payable to the Treasury is £1,518 14s. 5d.; arrears owing by the council at the 1st December, £2,876 5s. 8d. The proposed work consists of a pumping scheme from the Murrumbidgee at Tenandra, where there is good natural storage in the water-holes, which, with the completion of the Barren Jack dam, can always be kept full. The pumping machinery will be in duplicate, each set being capable of lifting 24,000 gallons per hour, and pumping ten hours per day for six days per week. Each set will then supply the maximum consumption of 50 gallons per head for a population of 2,900 persons, together with about 60,000 gallons for locomotive purposes and sales by meter. This is somewhat in excess of present requirements, and allows of some growth to the town before

[*Mr. C. A. Lee.*

the scheme is brought into operation. There will be two settling reservoirs, about a mile from the river, from which the water will gravitate through 18½ miles of 9-inch steel mains to the town. The existing reticulation will be utilised in the town to serve householders, the railway, &c. The estimated cost of the additions under the new scheme is £52,000, added to which there will be absorbed portion of the old scheme, valued at £8,714, making a total of £60,714. It is then proposed that the balance of the old debt, £33,286, be written off. Following is the financial position, with debt written down:—Estimated annual charges—Annual repayment on £60,714 to cover interest and sinking fund, at 3½ per cent., for fifty years, 4.2634 per cent. per annum, £2,588; renewal fund on £45,100 for pumping machinery and steel gravitation main, which it is estimated will have to be renewed in twenty five years, at 2.5674 per cent. per annum, £1,157; repairs and stores, wages, fuel, &c., engine-driver's wages, fuel (894 cords at 10s.); turncock and office expenses, £772; total, £4,517. Revenue: 5d. in the £ on the unimproved value, with a 20s. minimum for all tenements, £1,400; Railway Department, £3,000; water by measure to private consumers, £150; total, £4,550. Every investigation was made, without success, to find a catchment from which a sufficient quantity of water could be had for both domestic and railway purposes, and the only course now open is to obtain a supply from the Murrumbidgee. If I am able to show that the proposed work will be remunerative, and will get rid of an evil that has existed there for many years past, good work will be accomplished. For years no Minister would face the position; but I have decided to face it, as the present state of things cannot be allowed to continue. If a supply could be obtained at less cost from any other source, I would not make this proposal; but inquiry has shown that this scheme is the only one that will fulfil the purpose.

Question proposed.

Mr. HOLMAN (Cootamundra) [10.40]: I feel that after the very full and convincing statement made by the Minister,

my task, as the member for the district, is a very light one. But I think it becomes me to add a word or two in support of the proposal. I consider that there is urgent and crying necessity for some such work as that now proposed. The Minister has made the matter so clear that I feel some hesitation about going over the ground a second time. I do not wish to unnecessarily take up the time of the Committee, but I would point out that this is a matter in which not only have the whole available resources of the district for water supply been examined by the municipal council in the light of local knowledge and experience, with the result that every scheme has been laid aside in favour of the one now proposed, but the House has for its guidance the fact that every other scheme has also been rejected by the expert officers of the Railway Commissioners, who are as much concerned as are the local residents in obtaining a good water supply. For many years past the residents have actually had to cart water at a cost greatly in excess of the £3,000 per annum, which they are cheerfully prepared to pay for the advantage of an adequate water supply. I happen to know that the officers of the Railway Commissioners have been engaged in exploring the local sources of supply, which have all been rejected as insufficient. Therefore, this scheme comes before the House with the double recommendation of the local council and of the Railway Commissioners. With regard to the importance of the supply to the residents, I need not add anything to what has been stated by the Minister, who is fully seized of the hardships endured for many years owing to the insufficiency of the present supply. I can only indorse what has been stated by the Minister, and ask the House to allow the matter to rest upon the impartial judgment of the Public Works Committee. The residents of the district are quite prepared to stand or fall by the decision of the committee, and I believe that there can only be one possible outcome of the deliberations of that body, namely, the recommendation of the scheme.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

LEICHHARDT TO HOMEBUSH ELECTRIC TRAMWAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [10.45], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a line of electric tramway from Leichhardt to Homebush.

He said: I submit the book of reference and plans, and for the information of hon. members I may state that the estimated cost of construction, exclusive of cost of the bridge over Main Northern line at Strathfield, is £47,617, whilst the rolling-stock, power and feeders, car-shed and repair shop are estimated to cost £19,400, the total being £67,017. The length of the line will be 4 miles 60 chains, single track, with necessary loops. No resumptions would be required. With regard to the over-bridge, as this crossing is now to be closed, and a bridge would have to be provided in any case, the total cost should not be made a charge on the tramway. The route will be from Norton-street, Leichhardt, along the Parramatta-road to a point opposite Homebush railway station. It was represented by a deputation which waited upon the Minister on 5th November, 1908, that the tramway would greatly assist to develop a large residential area, and would be a great convenience to the residents in enabling them to get to the railway stations on the Parramatta line in much less time than it takes them to walk now. Under present conditions, many residents of the intermediate towns required a considerably longer time to get to Sydney than it took to get to Parramatta. The line would also be a great convenience to persons having business at the proposed new abattoirs at Homebush, which would also attract a considerable addition to the resident population. It would also be of great assistance in facilitating traffic between the business centres *en route*, irrespective of traffic to the city. Time would be saved to business men and workpeople in getting to and from their places of business. The Chief Railway Commissioner reports that the estimated annual expenditure is: Interest on £67,017, at 3½

per cent., £2,513; working expenses, £8,463, equals £10,976; and the estimated revenue, £9,600, leaving an estimated annual loss of £1,376. He says:

With regard to the estimated revenue, a great proportion of it will be obtained from the existing traffic on the Main Suburban railway or from the Abbotsford tramline, and the estimate is based on the probable traffic that will be obtained to-day. If the line be not constructed for, say, three years from date, the estimated revenue might be put at from £1,000 to £2,000 per annum higher. Owing to the congested state of the city thoroughfares, it would be inadvisable, in the event of the line being constructed, for the trams to be brought into the city. Under the scheme for city railways, outlined by me and indorsed by the Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City and its Suburbs a western suburban railway is proposed, having a station in Parramatta-road in close proximity to Norton-street, from whence the new tramline would commence. If this tramway be constructed, it should act as a feeder to this railway, but it should not be constructed in advance of the railway referred to.

With regard to the crossing of the Main Northern line at Strathfield, I could not agree under any circumstances to such crossing being on the level, and the cost of a bridge must be added to the Engineer-in-Chief's figures abovementioned.

In view of the facilities, both railway and tramway, at present afforded to these suburbs, I am of opinion that the proposal is premature, especially in view of the fact that the removal of the abattoirs to a new site at Homebush Bay will inevitably lead to some variation in the movement of the population, and it would be well to see how this is likely to affect the existing railway and tramway traffic before deciding upon the future facilities to be afforded in this neighbourhood.

There is a very large population between the railway and the existing tramline that is not in any way served by existing means of communication. The proposed tramway along the Great Western-road, starting from Norton-street, Leichhardt, and extending to Homebush, will serve the residents of no less than six different electorates. Representations have been made to the Public Works Department for many years past in connection with this matter. About seven years ago a very large deputation waited upon the late Minister regarding it. The proposal has been laid on one side from time to time, but during all that period the district has been very largely increasing in population, and to-day there are some

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thousands of people situated over a mile from either a tram or a railway, and, more than that, they are not blessed with the best of roads either. This tramline will go along the main western road, and therefore will pick up the maximum of traffic. In other words, it will be to all intents and purposes a street railway in that direction, and although we hope to see a circular railway, the western portion of which will necessarily go out there, when constructed, that must of necessity be some years hence. This tramway will then be in existence, and will be a good paying concern, and, when that railway is constructed, as the Chief Railway Commissioner says, this line will be an invaluable feeder to it; but there is no risk in putting the tramway down now, because the traffic is ready for it, and although it may possibly not pay the first year, though I believe it will, there can be no doubt about its ultimate financial success. As regards its being considered premature, because the royal commission recommended that a railway should be constructed in that direction, I take an opposite view. We want both the railway and tramway. The railway could, after all, serve only the population in its immediate vicinity, whilst tramways in the outlying suburbs will serve as feeders to it. When the new abattoir is completed, I feel sure that there will be a very large traffic to and from it. I think that this work is a most justifiable one, and therefore I have no hesitation in asking the House to refer it to the Public Works Committee. I feel satisfied that when that body investigate it, they will find the evidence shows that whilst it is necessary to have it to meet the special requirements of the people, it will not be a burden on the taxpayers, and it will in no way operate against the interest of the present tramway.

Question proposed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Belmore) [10.54]: I should have liked to hear the Minister state the rate of interest this tramway will have to bear?

Mr. C. A. LEE: Three and three quarters!

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is good enough to start with. It is marvellous how these tramways create their own traffic. When people who have had

doubts concerning them go away, and come back years afterwards, they find a tremendous amount of business going on which they never anticipated. Take the case of the Spit tramway. I constructed that in opposition to the views of the Railway Commissioners, Sir William Lyne, and Sir John See. They all thought that I was going to add a useless tramline to the tramway system. But look at it to-day! Not only has it created a tremendous traffic down to the Spit, but on each side of the line there are a number of valuable structures in the shape of residential houses. The same applies to all the tramways. You can hardly point to one of the lines running out of Sydney constructed during the last seven or eight years in connection with which there has not been a tremendous increase of population. I can remember the *Sydney Morning Herald*, in 1903, when I was in office, saying that in the previous year no less than £3,000,000 had been spent on new tramways in Sydney and suburbs. The proposed line is a good one; it will connect portions of suburbs which hitherto have been isolated, and I am sure that once it is constructed and gets a fair start it will more than bear out what the Minister has said. I therefore have great pleasure in supporting this proposal, notwithstanding the fact that the western railway may go out there. The western railway will not affect the traffic on this line, which will have a local traffic, that will grow every year. I have no hesitation in supporting it, because I know it will be a reproductive line in three or four years' time.

Mr. CARMICHAEL (Leichhardt) [10.57]: I can thoroughly indorse what has been said by the Minister and the hon. member for Belmore. I believe that this line will pay right from the start, which is a great consideration. It will also improve in traffic as years go on. As far as the necessities of the districts through which it will pass are concerned, I believe it will admirably serve them. From every point of view, I think it is a good line to send along to the Public Works Committee, and I am very pleased the Minister has seen fit to refer it to the committee. I am sure that their report will be a favourable one, and then I hope

the Minister will see his way to accept the report and carry out the work in the near future.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

DARLEY-ROAD, RANDWICK, TO LITTLE COOGEE TRAMWAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [10.59], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a line of electric tramway from Darley-road, Randwick, to Little Coogee.

He said: I produce the plan, book of reference, and estimate of cost. The estimated cost of construction, double track, is £37,893; rolling-stock, power, car-shed, and workshop, £43,870; total, £81,763. The length of the proposed line is 2 miles 42 chains, and the steepest grade 1 in 15. The route is *via* Darley-road, Orange-street, Thomas-street, Glebe-street to Susan-street, and along that street to a point opposite Fern-street; then, after passing through private property into Susan-street, it enters private property again, after which it follows Susan-street to its eastern end, and ultimately terminates on the north side of Battery-street, between that street and the bay. It having been pointed out to the Randwick council, when that body was urging the construction of the line, that one of the recommendations of the royal commission on the city of Sydney improvement was that the Little Coogee district should be served by a circular railway, a reply was received to the effect that in the council's opinion the proposed circular railway would not benefit the residents along the route of this proposal. A very large petition has been presented, urging the carrying out of the extension from Darley-road; but at a recent deputation two other alternative routes were advocated. The landholders along Darley-road have protested, on the other hand, against any tramway being taken along that thoroughfare, or any of the Centennial Park frontages. It was pointed out that within 300 yards along the line of the proposed route, without encroaching nearer to other lines, there were 717 houses, and at an average of four residents in each, it

meant a resident population to serve of 2,868. These people at present have to wait from ten to twenty-five minutes to get a tram. In addition this line would relieve the Waverley and Coogee lines, and on holidays and during the summer time there would be a great tourist traffic. The report of the Chief Commissioner for Railways, dated 1st December, 1909, is as follows:—

I beg to submit my report in regard to the proposal to construct a tramway from Darley-road, Randwick, to Little Coogee.

Cost of Construction.

| | £ | £ |
|--|-------------------|---------|
| Chief Engineer's estimate of cost of construction, double track. | 37,893* | |
| Rolling-stock | 18,850 | |
| Cost of power, including feeders | 17,480 | |
| Car-shed and workshop accommodation. | 7,540 | |
| | <u> </u> | 81,763 |
| Estimated Annual Expenditure. | | |
| | £ | £ |
| Interest on £81,763, at 3½ per cent. | 3,066 | |
| Working expenses | 13,135 | |
| | <u> </u> | +16,201 |
| Estimated revenue | | £18,153 |

* Exclusive of cost of land resumptions.

† Exclusive of interest on cost of land resumptions.

The revenue, namely, £18,153, is estimated to be derived from the new line, but this largely consists of business diverted from the existing lines, and the new traffic is only estimated at present at £2,185 per annum.

In connection with the diversion of traffic from the existing lines, it is estimated that there will be a decrease in the working expenses of £3,644, leaving a net estimated loss of £12,324 on the existing lines.

The Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs reported in favour of a circular railway, which would serve this district, and when that railway is constructed it would be a simple matter to provide a short feeder line from it to Little Coogee, and, under these circumstances, I am of opinion that it is undesirable to incur the great expense of laying down the proposed tramway along Darley-road.

From the gradient diagram, it is observed that the last 2 chains of the line are situated on a gradient of 1 in 16·8, 1 in 29·5, and a short piece of 1 in 44, and apparently it is proposed to have a dead end.

I must point out that a terminus on such a grade as this would be unsatisfactory, and if it be decided that the line should be constructed, arrangements should be made to provide a circular loop and an improved gradient.

Here, again, this question of a circular railway crops up, which may or may not be carried out in the near future.

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But if a circular railway is made on the eastern side, I fail to see how it is going to serve the population which this proposed tramway will reach; whilst on the western side of the line there must necessarily be the large gap there is to-day, because a railway will only serve the population to the same distance as the tramway. And there is a large population to-day which will be outside the influence of any railway. Therefore, if this tramway is made, it will act as a feeder to the railway, so that I cannot see that there is any possible danger or any likelihood of loss in constructing the line.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Is it not a fact that there is a battery for defence purposes which this line will serve?

Mr. C. A. LEE: Yes.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is a big argument in its favour!

Mr. C. A. LEE: I am not attaching any importance to that. I am looking at the question from a cold financial aspect. We all know the enormous rush there is to the beaches. Wherever there is the surf, it is marvellous the tens of thousands of people who visit it. None of our eastern trams to-day can conveniently carry the traffic to the respective watering-places. This is a place of growing popularity, and I feel sure that the good results obtained at Bondi will be obtained here. The Bondi tram was taken out before the days of surf-bathing. It was well patronised in those days; but since then it has become one of the most overcrowded trams we have in the whole system. I see no reason to fear the financial results of this proposal, because, after all, building is bound to go ahead, and the number of people will increase, and it is only a matter of time when this tram will have to be taken out. I think it is right that it should be inquired into. All sorts of representations have been made to me by the hon. member for the district, the municipal council, and a number of prominent persons, so much so that I had the matter thoroughly looked into; and although the Chief Commissioner for Railways does not agree with me in regard to the financial results, still I beg to differ from that gentleman

in his honest opinion regarding this matter. I think the results will be better than he has forecasted; and although it may be, from the Chief Commissioner's point of view, desirable to have a circular railway, I, for one, cannot see how a circular railway is going to serve the whole of the inhabitants. I admit that a circular railway may be necessary in the near future; but in any event, it will be necessary to build this tramway. The more you extend the tramway system, the more you will be providing traffic for this circular railway when it is made. I look upon this as a just proposition, and I refer it to the House.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

GLENREAGH TO DORRIGO RAILWAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [11.7], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Glenreagh to Dorrigo.

He said: I should like to explain that this proposition has come along in consequence of a reference made to the Public Works Committee of the railway from Coff's Harbour to the Dorrigo, which was rejected. The committee recommended that the line should start from a place called Glenreagh, to the same objective, for reasons which are given in their report. The committee, therefore, have already inquired into this route; but it will be necessary to make it the subject of a reference to them, because, although they have the power to inquire into all rival routes, if they reject the original route submitted to them, and recommend another, it has to be referred to them in a formal way. The three schemes originally got out were:

| | Estimated cost. |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Coramba to Dorrigo, on 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge with 2-chain curves, to be worked with a special "Shay" engine. Maximum grade, 1 in 25; curves, 2-chain radius; length, 37 miles 8 chains; average per mile, £6,201..... | £239,073 |

Estimated cost.

| | |
|---|----------|
| 2. Coramba to Dorrigo on 2 ft. 8 in. gauge, with 2-chain curves. Same length, grades, and curves as No. 1; average per mile, £5,136 | £190,560 |
| 3. Glenreagh, <i>via</i> Bushman's Range, to Dorrigo, on 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge. Grade, 1 in 40 with the load, and 1 in 60 against; curves, 10-chain radius; length, 37 miles 58 chains; average per mile, £17,684 | £667,128 |
| The 4 ft. 8½ in. line from Glenreagh on the easy grades and curves being deemed prohibitive on the score of cost, it was decided to secure statutory reports from the Chief Commissioner on the two proposals from Coramba, namely, 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge and 2 ft. 6 in. gauge. These were as under:— | |

Standard-gauge line.

| | £ |
|---|---------|
| Estimated cost of construction, exclusive of land and compensation..... | 230,073 |
| Rolling-stock—Two special locomotives | 9,000 |
| Total capital expenditure..... | 239,073 |
| Estimated expenditure—Interest at 3½ per cent. per annum..... | 8,368 |
| Working expenses— | |
| Locomotive | £2,886 |
| Permanent-way | 3,070 |
| Traffic | 640 |
| | 6,596 |
| Annual expenditure | 14,964 |
| Estimate of revenue | 7,178 |
| Estimated annual loss | £7,786 |

Narrow-gauge line.

| | £ |
|---|---------|
| Estimated cost of construction, exclusive of land and compensation..... | 190,560 |
| Rolling-stock—Suitable narrow-gauge engines, &c. | 26,250 |
| Total capital expenditure..... | 216,810 |
| Estimated expenditure—Interest at 3½ per cent. per annum..... | 7,588 |
| Working expenses— | |
| Locomotive | £4,122 |
| Permanent-way | 3,070 |
| Traffic | 1,140 |
| | 8,332 |
| Annual expenditure | 15,920 |
| Estimate of revenue | 7,178 |
| Estimated annual loss | £8,742 |

In view of the small difference in the figures, the wide gauge scheme at the estimated cost of £239,073 was referred to the committee.

The committee, after a most exhaustive inquiry, which included visits to two other states to fully investigate the working of narrow-gauge lines, came to the conclusion that it was not expedient to construct the proposed line from Coramba, but recommended that a line be constructed from Glenreagh. This being a totally different proposal to the one submitted to the committee, involves re-reference.

Line now proposed.

| | Estimated cost. £ |
|---|----------------------|
| Glenreagh, via Bushman's Range, to Dorrigo, on 4 ft. 8½ in gauge ... | 334,146 |
| Cost of two additional locomotives added | 9,000 |
| | <hr/> 343,146 |

Length, 41 miles 77 chains; ruling grade, 1 in 30; curves, 5 chains radius.

The alteration from a grade of 1 in 40 with 10-chain curves to 1 in 30 with 5-chain curves, which will necessitate special type locomotives, has enabled a reduction to be made in the estimate for this connection of £313,982.

Commissioner's Report.

The report of the Chief Railway Commissioner on this new proposal is as under :—

In accordance with the request of the Hon. the Minister for Public Works, and in compliance with section 28 of the Public Works Act of 1900, I beg to report as follows, on the proposal to construct a line of railway from Glenreagh to Dorrigo, a distance of 41 miles 77 chains :—

| | £ |
|---|----------------|
| Estimated cost of construction (exclusive of land and compensation) | 334,146 |
| Cost of two special locomotives | 9,000 |
| | <hr/> £343,146 |
| Estimated Annual Cost— | |
| Interest on capital at 3½ per cent..... | £12,010 |
| Maintenance and running charges | 6,543 |
| | <hr/> 18,553 |
| Estimated earnings | 8,148 |
| | <hr/> |
| Difference | £10,405 |

This proposal for a standard-gauge line, with ruling grades of 1 in 30, and the minimum radius of curves to be 5 chains, commends itself to me as being preferable to the one previously submitted and reported upon from Coramba to Dorrigo. The junction at Glenreagh would undoubtedly be more central to the ports of South Grafton and Coff's Harbour, and the financial result of the proposal would be improved thereby. While the estimate of revenue furnished is for the local line only, I am satisfied that, given railway facilities, the development of the Dorrigo district will be rapid, and that the earnings of the proposed line will increase correspondingly.

It will be seen that we go back to the standard gauge, and this ruling grade as recommended by the committee. Although it shows a difference of £10,000 a year in the first instance, the committee admit that when the line is opened to Dorrigo, in consequence of the rapid strides that magnificent district will make, the loss will very soon be made up. I think so too. There is no other way in

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which we can open up the Dorrigo country. We have tried roads. A large amount of money has been spent on roads which have been absolutely unable to meet the traffic. I endeavoured to get a narrow-gauge railway at a low cost, but it was found that the difference between the narrow gauge and the standard gauge was so small that it would be better, in the interests of the railway system generally, to adopt the standard gauge. The line will be a tributary, therefore, of the North Coast railway, but instead of joining at Coramba, it will join at Glenreagh. We have had to disregard the local desires in several places, and select a route that presented the least engineering difficulty, and one by which the line could be constructed at the least cost, having in view that the object to be served was the development of the Dorrigo district, which object I take it will be gained if this proposal is carried out. The Public Works Committee unanimously recommended the line after very full investigation, and I am not prepared to disregard their decision. It goes on to them, I should say, almost as a matter of course, because they have already recommended it, but inasmuch as it must be referred to them again I have to take this formal course.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

RICHMOND TO KURRAJONG RAILWAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [11.15], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Richmond to Kurrajong.

He said: The estimated cost of this line, exclusive of land resumptions, is £37,916. Its length is 6 miles 68 chains, and the cost per mile is therefore £5,534. The ruling grade is 1 in 30, and the sharpest curves, 5 chains radius. The line commences at the terminus of the Blacktown-Richmond railway, and, crossing the Hawkesbury River, proceeds *via* the village of Enfield, then crosses Redbank Creek, terminating near Woodhill's store at Mount Mailland, at the junction of the Grose Valley and the Richmond-

Kurrajong roads. The commissioner's report, dated 9th November, 1909, is as follows :—

I beg to report as follows in regard to the proposed extension of the Blacktown-Richmond line to Kurrajong :—

Two proposals have been submitted for consideration, namely : (a) for the construction of a line 8 miles 18 chains in length, at an estimated cost of £51,714, exclusive of land and compensation ; and (b) the construction of a line 6 miles 68 chains in length, at an estimated cost of £37,916, exclusive of land and compensation. The terminus of the latter line would be at a point 44 miles 51 chains from Sydney, at the junction of the Grose Valley and Richmond-Kurrajong roads ; and as it would practically serve the same purpose as the longer line, the estimate of the probable revenue and expenditure on the proposed line has been based on same.

Cost of construction.

| | | |
|---|---|--------|
| Chief Engineer's estimate of cost of construction, exclusive of land and compensation | £ | £ |
| | | 37,916 |

Estimated annual cost.

| | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| Interest on capital at 3½ per cent. | 1,327 | |
| Maintenance of line, and traffic and locomotive expenses.. | 1,927 | |
| | | 3,254 |

Estimated annual revenue.

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Goods traffic | 745 | |
| Passenger, coaching, and mails | 572 | |
| | | 1,317 |

Difference £1,937

I have visited the district proposed to be served by this line, and consider it has some claims for consideration when the circumstances are favourable. The population of the district numbers about 1,400, who are largely employed in fruit and vegetable growing, and who, no doubt, at the present time suffer considerably by reason of the distances over which they have to cart their produce to Richmond. The locality furnishes many objects of scenic interest ; and if the lines were extended, there would, probably, be a fair amount of tourist traffic, and a large increase in the residential population might confidently be looked for. Viewed from a commercial standpoint the estimated earnings would not cover the cost of maintenance and running expenses, leaving the interest charge unprovided for. But from a state standpoint, allowing for development and the loss at present sustained by fruit-growers, owing to the absence of railway communication, consideration as indicated might be extended.

With regard to the proposal to carry the line over the existing road bridge across the Hawkesbury River, near Richmond, I am strongly of opinion that this should not be done. The structure is of such a character that the weight of the locomotive would require to be limited to 24 tons, which, over a line with heavy gradients

of 1 in 30, would be very undesirable. To conduct an effective service on the line, it would require to be worked by an engine of much greater tractive power—and, therefore, of greater weight—than could be obtained from an engine limited to the carrying capacity of the bridge.

I am in a position to say that the bridge referred to is in every way suitable. It is quite a new bridge, one of the most modern type, capable of carrying any railway line you can place upon it. It is wide enough for the purpose, and I have had inquiries made, and find that it can be strengthened at very small cost indeed. I think this is a proposal worth inquiring into.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

SUBWAY FROM MOORE-STREET, SYDNEY, TO LAVENDER BAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [11.20], rose to move :

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a subway from Moore-street, *via* Fort Macquarie and Kirribilli Point, to Lavender Bay, for the purpose of affording railway communication between Sydney and North Sydney.

He said : This is a proposal to construct a subway from Moore-street, Sydney, *via* Fort Macquarie and Kirribilli Point, to Lavender Bay, to afford railway connection between Sydney and North Sydney. Estimated cost of subway, exclusive of electric power, as given by royal commission on communication between Sydney and North Sydney, £753,000 ; power house, sub-station, and transmission lines, rolling-stock, signals, &c., car-sheds, and repair shops (as estimated by Chief Commissioner), £312,500 ; total, £1,045,500. Length of railway, 2 miles 5½ chains, of which 1,287 feet is in open cutting, 8,055 lineal feet in double-line subway, and 1,600 lineal feet in subaqueous double-line subway. Two lines of way would leave the existing Milson's Point-Hornsby railway near the head of Lavender Bay, and would follow in cutting between the cliffs and the existing line, but falling below the latter to between Dind and Paul streets. At

this point the line would enter into tunnel, and an underground station with two platforms 400 feet long would be provided. After leaving the station the line would curve under Campbell-street (still in tunnel), under which it would follow to near its intersection with Beulah-street, where it would curve to the water's edge, and enter the subaqueous tunnel, which would be constructed in a straight line to Fort Macquarie. The rail level on this section would be about 62 feet 6 inches below high-water spring tides. From Fort Macquarie the line would rise in tunnel to Moore-street station. The ruling grade on the northern side is 1 in 50, and on the city side, 1 in 40. The station at Moore-street consists of three platforms, each 500 feet long. For some time past the Harbour Trust officials have been engaged, for the Public Works Department, in making borings of the bed of the harbour on the routes of the subways recommended by the royal commission. Regarding the railway subway, borings have been taken between Fort Macquarie and Beulah-street, Kirribilli Point, at intervals of about 100 feet. Near the shores, where the rock is shallower, the borings have been taken at more frequent intervals, as these will be the critical points in the construction of the subway. Excepting where rock has been met with, the bores have been taken to a minimum depth of 80 feet below low-water mark, or about 10 feet beneath the point where the bottom of the proposed subway, as recommended by the royal commission, would be. The bores disclose that, generally speaking, the bed of the harbour consists of sand, in some places of a silty nature, in others of a compact character, or coarse sand mixed with shells. There is very little clay on this particular line. On the Fort Macquarie side, rock occurs at 200 feet out from the shore; but thereafter, across the harbour, there will not be any rock at depths above the bottom of the construction proposed, except of a very soft nature. The result of the borings confirms the estimate placed before the royal commission by the Public Works Department, for the proposal recommended by them, and now under

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reference. The following is the Chief Commissioner's report, dated 9th December, 1909:—

I beg to report as follows in regard to the proposed electric railway from Milson's Point to Moore-street, city, a distance of 2 miles 5½ chains:—

The estimate submitted by the Chief Engineer for Railway Construction of the cost of the proposed scheme is £753,000, which is exclusive of the cost of electric power, rolling-stock, &c. In dealing with this proposal, the desirability of adopting electric traction on the Hornsby-Milson's Point line has been kept in view, and only a proportionate amount of the total cost of the power house, power transmission, rolling-stock, &c., based upon the current required for the working of the proposed new line, has been charged.

The working expenses are estimated at £27,048, of which £10,715 is for power.

It is estimated that the revenue to be earned by the line would be about £22,323 per annum.

Summarised, the position is as follows:—

| | £ |
|---|---------------|
| Estimated annual expenditure—Interest on capital expenditure of £1,045,500, at 3½ per cent. | 36,593 |
| Working expenses:— | |
| Electrical | 20,115 |
| Traffic | 6,253 |
| Permanent-way | 700 |
| | <hr/> 27,048 |
| | 63,641 |
| Estimated revenue | 22,323 |
| Difference | <hr/> £41,318 |

It will be seen that in connection with this proposal it includes not only the cost of constructing the line, but also for equipping it, providing a power station, rolling-stock, and all the necessary means for supplying a thoroughly efficient means of communication. This is the outcome of an inquiry by a royal commission, which sat on this question some time ago. They recommended tunnels for tramways, for passengers, vehicles, and also for a railway. The Government are of opinion that we should construct a tunnel for a railway so as to connect our existing railways on both sides of the harbour, and when the railway is carried to Moore-street, there is provision made for a connection with the Central Railway Station, and also to form a connection with a circular line to the eastern suburbs. We think this is a proposal that may well be inquired into by the Public Works Committee.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

MUSWELLBROOK TO MERRIWA RAILWAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [11.27], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa.

He said: The estimated cost, exclusive of land resumption, is £201,784; length, 46½ miles—£4,339 per mile; ruling grade, 1 in 50 against the load, and 1 in 44 with it; sharpest curves, 10 chains radius. Portion of this line was included in a proposal for railway connection, Singleton to Cassilis, with a branch from Denman to Muswellbrook, referred to the Public Works Committee in December, 1902. The report was unfavourable. The statistics furnished by a recent deputation point to a very material all-round increase in the dairying industry; also that there would be a considerable increase in the area under cultivation. Closer settlement legislation has also altered the conditions and prospects of the line. The following is the Chief Railway Commissioner's report, dated 29th October, 1909:—

I beg to report as follows on the proposal to construct a line of railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa, a distance of 46 miles 40 chains:—

| | £ |
|---|---------|
| Estimated cost of construction (exclusive of land and compensation) | 201,784 |
| Estimated annual expenditure— | £ |
| Interest on capital cost at 3½ per cent. | 7,062 |
| Maintenance and locomotive and traffic charges | 5,204 |
| | 12,266 |
| Estimated annual revenue— | |
| Passengers, parcels, and mails | 2,800 |
| Livestock and merchandise | 5,900 |
| | 8,700 |
| Difference | £3,566 |

Since the last occasion upon which the route of this proposed line was inspected by me, considerable development has taken place in the direction of closer settlement; and, in view of the provisions made by the Closer Settlement Act for the resump-

tion of suitable properties, the construction of this railway is a matter worthy of consideration.

It is suggested that the proposed line should, if possible, be brought nearer to Denman, as the station, as at present located, will be 4 miles from the township. If a deviation could be arranged without inconvenience, I am of opinion that it would be desirable.

Whilst in the district, it was brought under my notice that a very valuable timber supply is available, which will be served by the proposed line. This has not been taken into consideration in the estimate of the earnings; but it would probably prove a source of revenue to the line.

The Railway Commissioner's report is a very favourable one, and I have it on the best authority that the owners of the estates in the locality are prepared, if this line is sanctioned, to immediately open their lands for settlement. I pointed out to them that the Government could take their lands under the existing act, but they say they are prepared to go much further than that, and throw open the whole of their estates. This has come from gentlemen who perhaps, ten years ago, would have looked upon it as a crime to be asked to give up an acre of their lands, but evidently a change has come over the scene.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

FLEMINGTON-BELMORE-GLEBE ISLAND RAILWAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [11.32], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a line of goods railway from Flemington to Belmore, and Wardell-road to Glebe Island and Darling Island.

He said: The estimated cost, exclusive of cost of land required, including grain sheds and two car-dumpers at Glebe Island, and approximate cost of jetty and dredging, is £707,994. The interest on this outlay at 3½ per cent. would represent £24,780 per annum. The proposed route is as follows:—Leaves Main Suburban line at or near Flemington, joining the Belmore line near Campsie, and diverging therefrom near Wardell-road; and, following the course of Long Cove Creek, passes

under the Main Suburban line between Lewisham and Summer Hill. The line then proceeds to Glebe Island, and, crossing Johnston's Bay and Pyrmont, gains access to Darling Harbour goods depôt, without fouling the entrance to Sydney passenger station at present. The Chief Commissioner's report, dated 28th November, 1908, is as follows :—

It has for some time been apparent that it is absolutely necessary to relieve Darling Harbour and Darling Island of the pressure associated with the shipment of coal, wheat, and other produce, and it is considered that the most suitable place for the conduct of that traffic would be Glebe Island, which will be available for the purpose on the removal of the abattoirs to Homebush Bay, which has already been approved. The whole of the area at Darling Harbour and Darling Island can, on the opening of the new depôt at Glebe Island, be utilised for dealing with city and country traffic exclusively.

There is also the equally imperative necessity for relieving the crowded suburban lines of the heavy goods traffic to and from Darling Harbour and Darling Island, and removing the restrictions to the passenger traffic which are now necessary owing to the ever-increasing goods traffic which has to be carried over the suburban lines.

It is not possible to state in figures what additional revenue will be earned, or what economy will be effected consequent upon the provision of the new lines; but the carrying out of the work proposed is an absolute necessity, as the congestion at present existing is of such an acute character that the business of the Railway Department cannot be conducted in such a manner as circumstances demand. The existing provision for the merchandise traffic of the state is to-day absolutely inadequate, and the best alternative is the construction of the suggested line.

In a subsequent communication it is pointed out by Mr. Johnson that the new abattoirs in course of erection will probably be completed within the next two years, and the new line provides the only access from the abattoirs to a central meat market to be erected. The proposed railway is, therefore, an essential part of the scheme, and must necessarily be completed before the abattoirs can be fully available. The present arrangements for dealing with goods traffic at Darling Harbour are

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most unsatisfactory, and cannot be properly improved until better means of access to the depôt, included in the new railway proposal, are provided. In the event of a good wool season, followed by a record wheat crop, the difficulty of getting full and empty waggons to and from Darling Harbour depôt by the present route through Redfern tunnel will be enormously great, and must result in the cost of handling not only wool and wheat, but also the ordinary goods traffic being considerably increased. Considerable settlement is taking place along some portions of the route of the proposed goods line, and it is of paramount importance, if expenditure for land is not to be excessive, that immediate steps be taken to resume the necessary properties. This line will have to be built in consequence of the removal of the abattoirs. It is intended to serve a threefold purpose. It will convey meat from the abattoirs, and take by-products to the South Coast line, and thence by a branch line to Botany. It will prevent the conveyance of the goods traffic through what is known as the tunnel, which is one of the most dangerous points on our railway system, and divert the traffic to Darling Island, as well as to Glebe Island, which is to be converted into a very large and important shipping depôt. It will save the enormous cost of resuming land at the tunnel, and there will also be provided that extra shipping accommodation which is necessary at the present juncture. Although the proposal is a costly one, it cannot be longer delayed, because, when the abattoirs are built, we must have some means of getting away the meat and the by-products.

Question proposed.

Mr. J. STOREY (Balmain) [11.35]: I desire to congratulate the Minister on bringing forward this proposal. We have had a standing committee in the electorates of Balmain, Rozelle, and Burwood for the purpose of urging the Government to bring forward this proposal, and I am glad to know that the Government are determined to carry out the work. It will be a most valuable work, because, apart from the congestion which exists at present at Darling Har-

bour, Glebe Island will in the future be a very important shipping centre, and for that reason alone the work will be justified. The residents of my electorate are favourable to the proposal, and on several occasions have put forward the idea which the Minister now promulgates. They feel that the commerce of the state is growing to such an extent that it is impossible to make adequate provision for shipping accommodation at Darling Harbour, and Glebe Island is the only deep-water centre available, unless you go round to Balmain. The shallow water at Blackwattle Bay makes it impossible for oversea ships to be accommodated there. I know that ultimately we shall have to go round to Balmain, but at the present time Glebe Island will meet requirements. I am glad to know that the Minister has listened to the representations which have been made to him. I know that he is in favour of the work, and I feel that this is only the beginning of the work that is going to be carried out in that particular part.

Mr. CARMICHAEL (Leichhardt) [11.40]: I have taken a keen interest in this matter since it was first mooted, and if the scheme now propounded has been elaborated by the Chief Railway Commissioner, I withdraw some of the harsh remarks I have had to make about that gentleman. The scheme is one of the best that has ever been submitted to this House, and I fully indorse all that has been said by the Minister and the hon. member for Balmain. I would urge the necessity of pushing on with the work, because a large amount of land that is now vacant will, unless steps are taken to resume it, be built upon within the next few years. At Lilyfield, for instance, where sidings will have to be put in, a large number of blocks are being taken up, and the resumptions at this point will become very expensive if matters are delayed. I would urge the Minister to take steps to reserve the land, so that it may not be built upon. There are one or two other localities in which the conditions are very similar. I fully indorse the Minister's statements, and I consider that the proposed line is one of the best that could be devised for heavy traffic purposes.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

BARELLAN TOWARDS HILLSTON RAILWAY.

Mr. C. A. LEE (Tenterfield), Secretary for Public Works [11.42], rose to move:

That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Barellan towards Hillston.

He said: The estimated cost, exclusive of land resumption, is £94,388. The length of the line will be 32 miles, and the cost £2,945 per mile. The ruling grade will be 1 in 100, and the sharpest curve 15 chains radius. This is an extension from the terminus of the Temora-Barellan railway, in the direction of Hillston, to a point 32 miles from Barellan. The approximate distance in a direct line from the new terminus to Hillston is 50 miles. The survey has so far only been made to this point. If the survey had been completed as far as Hillston, I would have submitted a proposal for the construction of the railway to that point; but I could only make a proposal for a railway extending for the distance that the survey has been completed. The proposal to connect Hillston from Wyalong has been twice before the Public Works Committee, both reports being unfavourable. On the last occasion (1904) the committee stated that the situation with regard to some of the country between the Murrumbidgee and the Lachlan Rivers, which it was intended the railway to Hillston should serve, when railway extension was first proposed, had altered materially since the line from Temora to Wyalong had been constructed, and that from Temora to Barellan had been authorised. Further, that the circumstances generally, as disclosed by the inquiry, did not justify the construction, at the time, of a railway to Hillston by any of the routes which were then under consideration. Since then the circumstances have entirely changed, through Parliament having authorised the carrying out of the Murrumbidgee northern canal scheme; and in connection with railway service to the land within the area to be irrigated, a committee consisting of the Chief Traffic Manager, Chief Engineer for Rivers, Water Supply, and Drainage, Chief Engineer for Railway Construction, and

the district surveyor, Hay, has furnished a detailed report on the subject. It was decided by this committee that the most desirable course would be to extend the line from Barellan to the neighbourhood of Binya, and then continue it by as direct a route as possible to Hillston, traversing the good agricultural land outside the irrigation settlement; and further, that a branch line be extended to the north-eastern boundary of the irrigation settlement, and thence, as circumstances permitted, along the northern boundaries of the water-channel. The Chief Commissioner's report, dated 16th November, 1909, is as follows:—

I beg to report as follows on the proposal to construct a line of railway from Barellan towards Hillston, a distance of 32 miles 4 chains:—

| | £ |
|---|--------|
| Estimated cost of construction (exclusive of land and compensation) | 94,388 |
| Estimated annual expenditure— | £ |
| Interest on capital cost at 3½ per cent. | 3,304 |
| Maintenance and locomotive and traffic charges | 2,668 |
| | 5,972 |
| Estimated annual revenue— | |
| Passengers, parcels, and mails | 1,809 |
| Livestock and merchandise | 1,815 |
| | 3,624 |
| Difference | £2,348 |

The proposed terminus of this line ends, approximately, at a point 50 miles from Hillston by map measurement; but this distance would be considerably increased by road. I do not, therefore, consider that the trade of the Hillston district, which is now transacted by rail *via* Carathool, distance 80 miles, will receive any appreciable benefit from the construction of the line, as proposed, even allowing that a new road with supplies of water *en route* for teamsters is opened for traffic. I recognise, however, that this proposal is associated with the Murrumbidgee northern canal scheme, which has been sanctioned by Parliament and it appears to me that the most desirable course would be to extend the line due west from Barellan, following travelling stock route No. 1,656, and entering the irrigable land near portion 11 (parish of Stanbridge); thence along the northern side of the canal, and terminating, for the present, at the same distance from Sydney as that proposed in the direction of Hillston.

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This suggested terminus of the line would be central to a very large area of land which it is proposed to resume and irrigate, and, no doubt, an important township would be created thereby.

In regard to the financial aspect—this, of course, will depend upon the extent of development arising from the settlement of the irrigable area. As, however, the Crown will get the benefit of the enhanced value of the land due to railway facilities, I am of opinion that the cost involved in the construction of the proposed line should be debited to the canal scheme.

I cannot agree with the Chief Railway Commissioner so far as that is concerned; but I would point out that this railway will be a very valuable adjunct to that portion of the irrigation scheme in the direction of Gunbar. It may be considered desirable to make a short deviation, so as to bring the railway into direct touch with the irrigable area; but the objective of this line is Hillston, and it is to that point that I would take it. This proposal is merely an instalment of the full line. I believe that it will be found that the irrigable area will produce exactly the class of products that will be most required in the dry districts that will be served by the railway in the direction of Hillston, and that it will be possible to convey these products into the dry districts during periods of drought at a minimum cost. Instead of lucerne hay having to be carted out at a cost of £12 or £13 per ton, it will be possible to transport it from the irrigation areas to the points at which it will be required at something like 10s. per ton. Moreover, it will be possible to bring large numbers of stock from the dry districts to the irrigation areas, where fodder is plentiful. I will take care that the survey towards Hillston is pushed on as much as possible. At Gunbar we have some of the best land in the irrigable area, and it may be considered desirable to make a short deviation in that direction.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

ABORIGINES PROTECTION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. WOOD (Bega), Colonial Secretary [11.50], rose to move:

That this bill be now read the second time.

He said: I understand that hon. members on either side regard this as essentially a non-contentious measure, as far as principle is concerned. I am going to ask the House to give me the second reading of the bill to-night. The Committee stage will be taken later, and if hon. members have any views to express in regard to details they will have full opportunities of threshing these out. The main provisions of this bill do not institute anything new. They simply give the board greater powers in certain directions, which, I am sure, hon. members will admit are highly proper and legitimate ones. In the first place, for the purpose of better providing for the care of aborigines, the board have vested in them greater powers than exist at present in relation to dealing with reserves—that is, areas specially set apart for aborigines' camps.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: It is a different style of board!

Mr. WOOD: No; the same board. The bill does not propose to amend the constitution of the board, but it proposes to affect their powers to some extent, not by conferring absolutely new powers on them, but by extending the powers they already possess—that is to say, they have general powers to control reserves which are considered sufficient and necessary, but are not as good as they might be in some respects. As to the supply of liquor to aborigines, I am sure that every hon. member is anxious to see it restricted as much as possible, and there are provisions in the bill dealing with that. At the present time the Aborigines' Protection Board spend about £26,000 per annum.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: Is this an annual vote?

Mr. WOOD: It is proposed that it shall be a statutory vote. It is a matter that I am looking into to some extent myself. The bill has been drafted by the board.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: But is not that a change of principle? Do we not vote the money every year?

Mr. WOOD: No; we have a statutory vote now under the old act, but this is increasing it. It is merely a matter of increased expenditure.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: But this will not come before the House at all!

Mr. WOOD: There is a special vote now.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: But it comes up on the estimates!

Mr. WOOD: No; that is for the general administration of the board only—£14,000, I think. The other main provisions of the bill are very essential ones. They give the board better power to deal with aboriginal and half-caste children. The great difficulty at present is in doing as much as it is considered desirable to do for the purpose of educating these children, and giving them opportunities to start out in life. The board are to have additional powers in that respect. I shall be glad if hon. members will accept the principles of the bill, and give me the second reading to-night. After they have looked into the clauses, any suggestions they have to make in regard to the powers of the board I shall be glad to give the fullest consideration, so as to make the bill as good a one as possible.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read the second time, and committed *pro formâ*.

FISHERIES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. WOOD (Bega), Colonial Secretary [11.57], rose to move:

That this bill be now read the second time.

He said: I ask hon. members to give me the second reading. There is no principle which is new or which is not in the existing act, except the reconstitution of the board, which will be open to the fullest discussion in Committee.

Mr. J. STOREY: That is most important!

Mr. WOOD: It will be open to discussion in Committee just as fully as on the second reading; and if hon. members will give me the second reading I will go into Committee *pro formâ*.

Mr. J. STOREY: Why is the hon. member bringing in the bill at all?

Mr. WOOD: Chiefly in the interests of the working fishermen and oyster lessees, who have been suffering from all sorts of hardships which are of a serious nature to them, owing to defects in the existing act. I am remedying those

defects at the request of deputations which have waited on me from those different interests. The other part is the reconstitution of the board, which, as I say, is open for as much discussion at the Committee stage as on the second reading.

Question proposed.

Mr. J. STOREY (Balmain) [11.59]: I do not want to take up time, but this is an important measure, and the hon. member is asking a good deal of the House. I take a great interest in this bill, and I have an idea that this bill is for the purpose of getting rid of the board.

Mr. WOOD: The hon. member is quite wrong!

Mr. J. STOREY: An alteration in the personnel of the board is a matter of moment, and to bring a bill forward which contemplates such a thing will mean that we shall require to sit to Christmas to deal with it. We were told that this was one of the bills which would not be brought on. There are a number of hon. members who want to talk on this—the hon. member for The Clarence for one; but hon. members have gone away.

Mr. WOOD: They told me they would vote for the bill without amendment!

Mr. MCGOWEN: We were told that the bill was not coming on!

Mr. J. STOREY: Hon. members told me differently when I spoke to them about it.

Mr. WOOD: Several members representing districts in which there are fisheries told me that the bill generally meets everything they want!

Mr. J. STOREY: I do not think it does. The hon. member had no right to bring the bill on at this hour. It is too important a measure. After all, it is only brought in at the instigation of men who wanted something to satisfy themselves, and because they could not get it, want to destroy a board that is doing good work, and which, if given proper powers, and allowed to do its work as it might, would do even a great deal more good than it has done.

Mr. WOOD: There will be every opportunity for discussion in Committee!

Mr. J. STOREY: In Committee we shall be confined to the particular clauses. Hon. members were told that

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no further business would be taken after the works proposals, which were allowed to go through on that understanding. Without saying anything in the way of laudation, I believe that the gentleman who occupies the position of chairman of the Fisheries Board cannot be surpassed in this state, and if I thought there was any desire on the part of the Government to remove him with the view to putting somebody in his place who, perhaps, is more amenable to pressure and less to discipline, I would not allow the bill to go even if I had to talk till 6 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. MCGOWEN (Redfern) [12.4 a.m.]: This is a very contentious measure. It repeals many sections of the existing act, and does away with the existing Fisheries Board, which is, to a certain extent, elective, inasmuch as the fishermen have a right to elect a representative. But it is brought in at this time in opposition to the promise made to me as leader of the Opposition that nothing but the public works proposals would be taken to-night. The Colonial Secretary is the only member who has been guilty of such a thing in my experience. He told us that we could debate a certain bill in detail in Committee, but when we get into Committee, he moved the gag on every clause. I do not say that I am opposed to this bill. No one has complained more than I have of the Fisheries Board. The hon. member did not make a second-reading speech when moving this bill to-night. When I come back after a few minutes' absence from the Chamber, I find he is trying some more of his tricks in pushing this bill through. I suppose the hon. member has bulldozed the Minister in charge of the House. I will not say a word of laudation about the Fisheries Board. It has given anything but general satisfaction in its administration. For many years we have had discussions here about the grievances of the fishermen, and from lessees of all kinds.

Mr. WOOD: I am remedying most of them in this bill!

Mr. MCGOWEN: The House has had no opportunity of judging that.

Mr. WOOD: I am carrying out the requests of the fishermen as put to me by three deputations!

Mr. MCGOWEN: There are other interests besides those of the fishermen. For many years we had complaints of various kinds, and a request was made for years most definitely by the fishermen from the North Coast to the South Coast as to their right to select one of their number to be on the board. I am not sure that they did not ask for two representatives. I put that in juxtaposition to the statement of the Minister that he is now carrying out their wishes. I question if they have gone back on the position they took up long ago, that they should have a representative man or men on the board. The Minister does not give them the right to select their representative.

Mr. WOOD: It contemplates that they shall have a representative!

Mr. MCGOWEN: The position is, that they want the right to select their representative. It is proposed under the bill to dissolve the existing Fisheries Board, and vest the powers and duties of the board in the Minister. Did the Minister state in his second-reading speech why he was taking such drastic action as that?

Mr. WOOD: I stated that the question of the constitution of the board could be fully discussed in Committee!

Mr. MCGOWEN: Does the hon. gentleman mean to take the bill through Committee to-night?

Mr. WOOD: No. I promise the hon. member that I shall not bring the bill on in such a way that he will not be able to discuss fully the question of the constitution of the board!

Mr. MCGOWEN: I shall take the Minister's promise, although he did not keep it in regard to the Dentists Amendment Bill. I frankly admit that the management of the board has not been of a satisfactory nature during the last three or four years. We propose to call into existence a board appointed by the Government; but I fear that there will be the same disturbing element in connection with the nominee board as has existed in connection with the elected board. I am not referring now to the chairman particularly, but I do refer to

certain officials in the Fisheries Department who have been the cause of all the disturbances that have taken place within the last five or six years. I realise that the Minister has a very difficult task in front of him in remodelling the Fisheries Department, and, recognising that this bill requires to be considered more in detail when in Committee, I will not say anything further in regard to the creation of the board, except to point out that the board created in this way may, after all, be nothing more nor less than departmental officers. If hon. members will look at clause 3, they will see that it says:

The Governor may appoint a board of not more than five persons, to be known as the Advisory Board on Fisheries, to advise the Minister on matters relating to sea, coast, and inland fisheries, and the more effectual protection and improvement of such fisheries, and the determination of the times and seasons at which the taking of any species of fish may commence and shall cease, and any matters under the principal act, or any act amending the same, upon which the Minister may desire their advice.

That simply means that this board, if created by this measure, will be designated an advisory board; but of what use will it be?

Mr. WOOD: If the hon. member will agree to the suggestion I have made, I promise to give him a fair opportunity to test that, and I will give any explanation desired. It is to be an advisory board, I admit!

Mr. MCGOWEN: I am now dealing with the main principle of the bill, and that is dependent on the other clauses. Clause 2 absolutely dissolves the board, and if we affirm the dissolution of the board as a matter of principle, and then affirm the general principle of the bill, we agree to the institution of a board which, after all, would be nothing more nor less than a few departmental officers, with no power whatever of a board.

Mr. WOOD: The Committee could omit all the clauses relating to the board, and still go on with the rest of the bill. They are two different parts!

Mr. MCGOWEN: When we are dealing with the second reading of the bill, and affirming its principles, hon. members

may say, "We are perfectly willing to dissolve the Fisheries Board, but what are you going to put in its stead?"

Mr. WOOD: That can be settled in Committee!

Mr. MCGOWEN: But if we pass clause 2 we put ourselves in the position of having to agree to clause 3, and have no power to alter it; whereas if we knew that we were going to have clause 3, we would not dissolve the present board.

Mr. ESTELL: If the Colonial Secretary substitutes the word "shall" for the word "may," in the second paragraph of sub-clause (1) of clause 3, we will have a board we can depend upon!

Mr. WOOD: In Committee hon. members can do what they think fit. They are not committing themselves to anything now!

Mr. MCGOWEN: Under the present constitution of the board, the fishermen have a right to select their representative. Clause 3 says:

The Governor may appoint a board of not more than five persons. . . . One member of such board may be a licensed fisherman.

If we substitute the word "shall" for the word "may" there, still the Colonial Secretary, and not the fishermen, will make the appointment.

Mr. WOOD: I do not object to their having a direct representative on the board!

Mr. ESTELL: Elected by the fishermen themselves?

Mr. WOOD: Yes, if hon. members like!

Mr. MCGOWEN: I will show what a lop-sided proposal this is. This bill is to call into existence a board, which may give the Minister advice—a board that exists only in name, a board with no power, and which will simply be there to advise the Minister.

Mr. WOOD: It will be a fair thing to discuss this in Committee!

Mr. MCGOWEN: We are talking of a board which is about to be created, and when it is created, what will be the good of giving them the right to elect one of their number to the board? My contention is, that this proposed board is not worthy of the name of a board. It can only advise the Minister "on matters relating to sea, coast, and inland fisheries." Information relating to that

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has been compiled, and the Minister can obtain it from the department. Further, the board is to deal "with the more effectual protection and improvements of such fisheries, and the determination of the times and seasons at which the taking of any species of fish may commence and shall cease." Of what use is that, except as regards the inland fisheries? What have we done to determine the time and season for taking any particular fish, so far as salt-water fish are concerned? "And any matters, under the principal act or any act amending the same, upon which the Minister may desire their advice." This board, I repeat, can only give advice. It is proposed to call into existence and fee a board which will largely consist of departmental officers, which can only give the Minister advice in certain directions enumerated in clause 3, upon which he already has the fullest information. My contention is, that in view of the restrictions imposed, there is no necessity to call this board into existence.

Mr. WOOD: If you do not want me to give concessions to these fishermen, go on and talk the bill out. I want to protect the fishermen from the wrongs from which they have been suffering ever since the original measure was passed!

Mr. MCGOWEN: I object to the way in which this bill has been submitted. I admit that there are wrongs to be redressed, but I am not satisfied that this bill is going the right way to do it.

Mr. C. A. LEE: If the hon. member is likely to speak for some considerable time yet, I would suggest that he should move the adjournment!

Mr. MCGOWEN: I shall be some considerable time. The hon. member has had plenty of time to bring in this bill. He has had the question before him for four years.

Mr. WOOD: And the hon. gentleman is going to talk it out!

Mr. MCGOWEN: I am not prepared to vote against the second reading of the bill, in view of the promise made by the Minister.

Mr. ESTELL: I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. WOOD: I will consent to the adjournment of the debate only on the

understanding that if the bill does not become law this session, it is not my fault.

Mr. PRICE (Gloucester) [12.27 a.m.]: I hope the debate will not be adjourned. There are a large number of fishermen closely interested who are in favour of the bill, which meets all requirements.

Motion agreed to; debate adjourned.

PADDINGTON STREETS EXTENSION BILL.

Mr. OAKES (Paddington) [12.30 a.m.] rose to move:

That this bill be now read the second time.

He said: This is simply a formal bill to vest in the Paddington council a small area of land, extending from Neild-avenue to Stephen-street. The land has been in the possession of the Water and Sewerage Board for sewerage purposes. The sewerage works are completed, and the Paddington council are anxious to get possession of the land, so as to make it a right-of-way for street purposes. It is necessary to do this by means of an act, for the reason that the Water and Sewerage Board hold land in their care by virtue of an act of Parliament, and when the land is required for street purposes, they must be dispossessed by act of Parliament. It is a common occurrence that the Water and Sewerage Board, having used land for the purpose required, hand it over to the local council.

Mr. MCGOWEN: How did the board come to get this land?

Mr. OAKES: It was originally used by them for the purpose of sewerage, and the sewerage having been completed, it is desirable that the land should be transferred to the council for street purposes.

Mr. BROUGHTON: Is there a sewer under the street?

Mr. OAKES: Yes. The Water and Sewerage Board have given their consent to the bill, and the Paddington council have asked for it. The total area of the land is only 2 roods 8½ perches.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read the second and third times.

ADJOURNMENT.

TRAIN SERVICES—SUSPENSION OF LABOUR CONDITIONS.

Motion (by Mr. C. A. LEE) proposed: That this House do now adjourn.

Mr. BURGESS (Burrangong) [12.38 a.m.]: I desire to point out that the important town of Young, on the branch railwayline between Blayney and Harden, recently had its train service curtailed to a tri-weekly one. The people did not take great exception to that, although it caused a great deal of inconvenience. Seeing that other places had been served in the same way, they came to the conclusion that it would be well to put up with it. To their great surprise, however, a few days later, the town of Cowra had its service restored to a daily one, and, strange to say, on that same day, the Young people were subjected to a further curtailment of their train service—that is to say, the running of the train that leaves Cowra at 12.50 a.m., by which people get across to the Southern line, was reduced to three times a week, and the running of the 9.30 a.m. train from Harden to Young, and thence to Cowra, was also reduced to three times a week. That reduction was notified in the same pamphlet as contained notification of the restoration of the daily service to Cowra. My contention is that Young, which is on the same line as Cowra, and which is a much more important town, should have received a daily service in the same way as Cowra. So far as the consumption of coal is concerned, a daily service could be run to Young with less consumption than is involved in the daily service to Cowra.

Mr. C. A. LEE: If the hon. member will see me in the morning, and give me full particulars, I will undertake to see the Chief Commissioner!

Mr. BURGESS: My contention is that the people of Young are being treated unfairly. They are very indignant, and it is at their desire that I am bringing this matter under the attention of the House.

Mr. C. A. LEE: I understand the hon. member to say that the same service that runs to Cowra could be extended to Young?

Mr. BURGESS: Yes; that could be done easily. I hope the Acting-Premier will see that Young shall receive the same amount of consideration as Cowra.

Mr. MACDONELL (Cobar) [12.46 a.m.]: I am entirely in accord with the view put forward by the hon. member for Burrangong. I do not say it is a scandal, but it is certainly not to the credit of the Colonial Treasurer that Cowra should get a daily train service when all the other country towns, many of which are infinitely more important than Cowra, are denied the same thing. The chief town in the electorate I represent simply towers over Cowra from the point of view of importance. One company there pays more in freight and fares in one year than Cowra pays in three years. That company has paid £64,000 in fares and freights in one year, and Cobar itself ranks third out of 400 and odd railway stations in New South Wales from a revenue point of view. There are only Homebush and Darling Harbour that earn more money than Cobar does. Yet Cobar is reduced to three trains a week while Cowra, a twopenny-halfpenny bush town, which happens to be represented by the Colonial Treasurer, gets a daily train.

Mr. WOOD: Is there anything in the Cowra district traffic as well as the town traffic? Surely there must be. I do not know anything about it!

Mr. MACDONELL: Of course there is a fair district round about Cowra, the same as there is a fair district round about Young, Coonamble, and Bourke. There are fair districts round about all these places, but all of them have had their train services curtailed, and we find this strong man, the Chief Railway Commissioner, writing a letter to "Dear Mr. Waddell," in which he says, "I can see my way to restore the daily train service to Cowra," and we find "Dear Mr. Waddell" making political capital by publishing a letter from "Tom Johnson," saying, "I am going to arrange to give you a daily service." The Colonial Treasurer is prepared to publish this letter from the Chief Railway Commissioner in the local newspaper, and get all credit for the thing, whereas, as far as the

merits of Cowra are concerned, there are twenty towns in New South Wales of greater importance.

Mr. WOOD: All I can say is, that if he is doing that, it is a bit cheap!

Mr. MACDONELL: I do not think that one is unfair in saying that he is. The importance of Cowra does not entitle it to any special consideration. There are other towns of more importance, and which have greater claims, and yet the Colonial Treasurer has sent forward representations from Cowra, and the Chief Railway Commissioner has been moved by them, and writes to "Dear Mr. Waddell," and "Dear Mr. Waddell" has the letter printed in the local paper, and gets political credit for what has been done. That is a thing that does not redound to the credit of any Government.

Mr. C. A. LEE: Has Cobar only a tri-weekly service?

Mr. MACDONELL: Yes. I desire to refer to a matter in regard to the Mines administration. I am not making the slightest charge against the hon. gentleman who administers the Mines Department. I am sure he does his very best. I am sorry the hon. gentleman was not able to give his whole attention to the Mines Department, for I believe that, notwithstanding his many shortcomings, he is a good administrator, and of course, one man cannot do two men's work. There was an application for suspension of labour conditions in a mine in which, I confess, I had a few shares myself, and that made me all the more anxious to see that justice was done. In my opinion, the management of that mine were absolutely wrong in the action they took. They were not prepared to recognise unions. There was some trouble on between them and the miners, with the result that, for some weeks past, the mine has been closed down. I do not think the directors were justified in the stand they took. Because some of the directors and some of the officials of the union were not too friendly, they actually refused to negotiate with the officers of the organisation, with the result that the mine was shut down. This has now been going on for six weeks or two months. The mine management refuses

[Mr. Burgess.]

to recognise the organisation, or to grant the terms the men require. They applied for a suspension of labour conditions, and the case was tried at Dubbo recently. The ground of the application, I ascertained from the warden, was "inability to secure workmen, owing to their refusal to continue working the above leases." They were prepared to pay wages, but they were not prepared to recognise the organisation, or to enter into any agreement, with the result that the mine was shut down. When the case was heard last Wednesday, at Dubbo, the warden granted them suspension. I submit that the warden was entirely wrong. Under the Mining Act there is no justification for the warden granting suspension of the labour conditions because certain employers and employees cannot get on together. The act specifies a number of reasons for which the warden may grant suspension—"If the claim or lease is unworkable by reason of accident to the machinery, subsidence, scarcity of water, sudden access of water, or any cause whatsoever." The latter part of that provision certainly cannot be taken to cover the ground put forward by the management of this particular mine. The words "or any cause whatsoever," refer to something in accordance with, or of the same nature as the preceding provisions. If we want to widen the authority of the warden to permit him to grant suspension under other conditions, we must confer a general power to grant suspension for any cause whatsoever. My contention is that the warden, in granting suspension under the circumstances I have mentioned, violated the Mining Act. There is absolutely no justification for suspending the labour conditions on those grounds. I think, in a matter like that, a warden who does wrong should be called to book, and the matter should not rest there, but the Minister himself should notify these people that he has a say in the matter, and there was absolutely no justification for the conduct of the warden, and the verdict should be set aside. That mine should be at work at the present time. They cannot say they were not able to pay the wages. Their trouble was that they were not pre-

pared to recognise the existence of an organisation of miners, and would not treat with them. The time has gone by for that kind of thing. Unionism has been here too long for any mine-managers to say they are not going to treat with such an organisation. There is another matter—another case of suspension, in connection with Crowell Creek—in which I am inclined to think the Minister for Mines has been somewhat misled by his officers. A petition was sent in, asking the Minister to refuse to grant any further suspension of labour conditions. This was a mine that for a long time was one of the best-paying mines in the state. It had £30,000 worth of plant on it.

Mr. WOOD: What has been done in that case?

Mr. MACDONELL: It has been given suspension after suspension.

Mr. WOOD: When?

Mr. MACDONELL: Well, right up to date.

Mr. WOOD: I think the hon. member will find that the last time that case came before me, I took up a position which simply set all further suspension at an end, and I think that he will find that is the position now!

Mr. MACDONELL: It is not so; and that is what I want to call attention to. The department wrote, telling these people that the matter was practically one for the warden to deal with. I think the Minister has been misled, because, in another case last year, which was practically an analogous one—that of the Cobar gold-mine—the warden made certain recommendations. The company were not satisfied with those recommendations, and subsequently there was an *ex parte* hearing, and altered conditions from those ordered by the warden in the first instance were granted, making it quite clear that the Minister really had power to review a decision of the warden. The department in their letter informed the petitioners that they had no right to review the decision of the warden.

Mr. WOOD: In what case?

Mr. MACDONELL: This was in the case of the Shuttleton mine. I am pointing out that the statement made by the department in the Shuttleton case was

different from the position the department took up in the Great Cobar case. In that case the warden gave a certain decision. Subsequently, on an *ex parte* application, the Minister had the matter reviewed, and made orders other than those that were made at the hearing. After this second hearing no notification was given to the people who opposed the granting of the suspension in the first instance. I am not going to say that the Minister was not within his rights in that respect. I am only saying that in the communication of the department as regards the Shuttleton mine, a different position was taken up by the department from that which they took up in the other case, and I say there was absolutely no justification for it. The company which has bought this property got it as the result of some underhand work. It was shut down, and although the plant was worth £13,000, the whole thing was sold for £5,000 I think. Many of the workers only got a fraction of their wages. Yet this crowd, who never spent a shilling on the mine, having bought it from the first crowd, who got it for £5,000, only paying £7,000 for it, after monkeying round and humbugging the people at Nymagee over the railway proposal, now want a further suspension of labour conditions, after having had two years' suspension. That is the Freehold Copper Properties, Limited.

Mr. WOOD: I think the hon. member will find that any further suspension has been stopped!

Mr. MACDONELL: No; according to the last letter I got from the department, the case is going to be heard before the warden on the 17th of this month. In the case of the Great Cobar Gold-mine, the department took the view that they had a right to a rehearing of the case, which was before the warden. In this case, when it was brought before them, they say they have no right to deal with it, and that the people will have to appear before the warden. If there is one case more than another that calls for drastic action, it is this Shuttleton case. The conduct of those people connected with the mine has been so gross that I feel it my duty to call attention to it.

Mr. WOOD (Bega), Secretary for Mines [1.4 a.m.]: I think that unques-

[Mr. MacDonell.]

tionably the other cases mentioned are such that the warden is justified in dealing with them. I do not know the particulars of the Shuttleton case, which has been going on so long. If the hon. member had informed me that he intended to speak on the subject, I would have been able to furnish him with particulars. I know that in one of those cases an application was made to me, and the recommendation had been made by the warden to some extent for an extension which I rather disagreed with, because I thought sufficient justification had not been given.

Mr. MACDONELL: That was the Great Cobar case, and I give the Minister credit for the stand he took!

Mr. WOOD: I always take that stand in a case which suggests that there is a want of *bona-fides* on the part of a company. While I do that I want it to be understood that in cases where companies apply for suspension of labour conditions under that section of the Mining Act, which I am afraid will not bear the interpretation which the hon. member has put upon it, and under which the warden has the absolute right to grant suspension, I cannot intervene. The hon. gentleman says that something took place some time ago. I do not know whether that was prior to the passing of the act of 1906, which considerably altered the position.

Mr. MACDONELL: Both cases have occurred since!

Mr. WOOD: I have taken the trouble to get legal opinions, and I am advised that I am not in a position to review the action taken by a warden under subsection (a) of that section, but under subsection (b), where a warden makes a recommendation to the Minister, it is for me to say whether I shall give effect to that recommendation or not.

Mr. MACDONELL: That is not my point at all. I contend that the warden's authority is limited to such reasons as an accident to machinery and that kind of thing!

Mr. WOOD: The hon. member's interpretation of that section, to my mind, is not correct. From what I can ascertain from legal opinion, it will not bear that construction, and a warden is entitled to grant suspension for reasons other than those stated in that section. I shall

have the cases looked into, and if there is any suggestion of *mala-fides* on the part of those companies in working their mines, and I have the power to intervene, I shall intervene as I have done hitherto.

Mr. HOLMAN (Cootamundra) [1.8 a.m.]: I desire to bring under the attention of the Government two little matters. One of them affects my own electorate, and the other I have been asked to mention by the hon. member for The Castlereagh, who desires the Minister to explain how it is that the proposed cross-country line from Gilgandra to Curlew is has been omitted from the proposals for reference to the Public Works Committee?

Mr. C. A. LEE: I explained that to the hon. member for The Castlereagh personally!

Mr. HOLMAN: The hon. member for The Castlereagh has requested me to ask the Minister to make the explanation to the House. The other matter with regard to which I wish to say a word or two is the fact that my electorate is amongst those which is suffering from a reduced train service. An important town like Temora has to submit to a tri-weekly service. Half the trains have been cut down right in the middle of harvest, and the inhabitants of what is probably the largest wheat field in the state are being put to great inconvenience. In view of the exceptional privileges which have been afforded to the residents in the electorate of the Minister for Railways I mention the case of Temora as presenting a very depressing contrast. The hon. member for Cobar urged the claims of his district to consideration equal to that extended to Cowra. But I venture to submit that there are special reasons why towns such as Temora, an important centre of the wheat-growing industry, should receive special consideration at this time of the year. There has been gross mismanagement somewhere. A daily service should have been maintained in the districts where wheat is being harvested, and these districts should have been the last, instead of the first, to suffer. I contend that there was no absolute necessity to cut down the service. The business of the country and of the Railway Commissioners is to run the trains and to find the necessary coal. Notwithstanding

any strike of coal-miners, the Government should have been able to obtain all the coal required, and the responsibility for cutting down the train services will have to be borne by the Government. They are not the slaves of either the coal-miners or the mine-owners, and should be able to obtain coal to run the railway service, and meet public requirements. I take this opportunity of putting on record my strong protest against the cutting down of the train services. The mere fact that coal supplies are running out is nothing. The Government know where they can be replenished. The Government has reserve powers at its command, and if necessary the Government could obtain all the coal that exists in New South Wales, won or unwon, to keep the railways going. The first duty of the Government and the Railway Commissioners is to see that the railways are kept going, and the full convenience of the public supplied. That has not been done for this cause; next year it may not be done for some entirely different cause. If a strike is to justify the stopping of the great highways of commerce in this state, then I suppose that another year the formation of a coal-ring will be a sufficient excuse, or a difficulty in getting the right kind of engine will be a sufficient excuse. If our great Government institution of the railways is to be in the hands of any private enterprise outside that likes to make a difficulty and put it in our path, we might as well abandon the idea of having an independent Government service, and submit ourselves to the private control of the railways. If all the convenience of the people of the interior can be nullified and the facilities which they enjoy to-day can be taken from them at the mere behest of a group of men over whom the state has no control in the coal-mining industry, what benefit is there in having railways as a public institution? Why not have them private, too? If we are to be in the hands of private enterprise at Newcastle, why not be in the hands of private enterprise for the railway service? What is there in having the railway system a public function if it is to depend on facilities being either granted or withheld at the behest of a body of private capitalists in the northern metropolis? The

position assumed by the Government in this matter is absolutely ridiculous, and will not at any stage hold water. As the representative of an important country centre, which is being bitterly affected by the action of the Government, I protest against the continuance of the policy which the Government have taken up. I hope that before Parliament is prorogued, we shall have an assurance from the Acting-Premier that this is not to be persisted in, and that a full railway service is to be restored, and full facilities given to the producers.

Mr. WADDELL (Belubula), Colonial Treasurer [1.18 a.m.]: I did not intend to occupy the time of the House, and would not speak were it not for some statements that have been made by hon. gentlemen opposite in connection with some alteration of the train service that has recently been made as regards Cowra. Hon. members are evidently trying to make it appear that because an alteration has been made in the train service to Cowra, some special advantage has been given to my electorate on account of my being the Minister for Railways. I might put out to hon. members the exact position, and I think that every fair-minded man will see that if the Chief Railway Commissioner had done anything else, he would be utterly unfit for his position.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: But we would all like to be Minister for Railways!

Mr. HOLLIS: What the Chief Railway Commissioner has done shows that he is unfit for his position!

Mr. WADDELL: I might mention that after the change was made affecting practically every electorate in the country except the town electorates in connection with the running of trains, by the introduction of a restricted service, very strong complaints were made from Carcoar by telegrams published in the newspaper, and very strong representations were made to me from Cowra by a gentleman there who acts as secretary in connection with all local public grievances, to the effect that very foolish arrangements had been made. There had been three trains running every day backwards and forwards from Cowra to Blayney, and when the first

change was made, the mail train, instead of running daily, was made to run only three times a week, and it was pointed out, both by telegram from Carcoar, and also by strong representations made to me from Cowra, that it was a very foolish thing—that if any one of the trains was to be taken off on some of the days of the week, it should not be the mail train. It would cost no more to let the mail train run, and only run one of the other trains three times a week instead of six times. When these representations were made to me, and I brought them under the notice of the Chief Commissioner for Railways—as I am bringing matters under his notice daily on behalf of hon. members opposite, as well as of hon. members on this side—he and his officers no doubt saw that a mistake had been made, and that without increasing the coal consumption, but actually with a small saving, a daily mail service could be given again. Under the circumstances, I submit that the Chief Commissioner for Railways could have done nothing else than comply. If he had done less he would have been subjected to strong censure. As regards the insinuations of hon. members opposite, that the Chief Commissioner would do more for me than for any other hon. member —

Mr. MCGOWEN: He has done more!

Mr. WADDELL: He has not; there is no other electorate, except, perhaps, the electorate represented by the hon. member for Burrangong, which is in the same position. This is the only case where there is connection between two of the main railwaylines of the country, and a connection of this kind is much more important as regards traffic than any branch line in the country. I do not know the merits or the demerits of the case put forward by the hon. member for Burrangong; but in this case the Chief Commissioner could not have done other than he did under the circumstances. I might point out that Cowra is a very important town, and that there is a very thickly-populated district. It is only 223 miles from Sydney, *via* Blayney, while it is 297 miles the other way. So far as my position as Minister for Railways is concerned, the hon. member for Bur-

[Mr. Holman.

rangong has not yet brought his case before me, and asked me to take action in the way of making representations to the Chief Commissioner for Railways; not that it is necessary that the hon. member should submit his case to me; he may submit it direct to the Chief Commissioner, and possibly he has done so.

Mr. HOLLIS: We cannot get near him!

Mr. WADDELL: It makes no difference on what side of the House hon. members sit as regards making representations to the Railway Commissioner.

Mr. MCGOWEN: You may make the representation, but the effect is different!

Mr. WADDELL: If I had before me the list of cases which have been submitted to the Chief Commissioner, it would be found that quite as many of the requests submitted by hon. members of the Opposition have been granted as by hon. members on this side. I may mention the request of the hon. member for Ashburnham, the hon. member for Durham, and the leader of the Opposition. I have put their cases before the Chief Commissioner with just as much desire that they should be granted as the case to which I have referred. The leader of the Opposition brought under my notice the case of a young fellow who was killed, and whose mother only received a small sum of money. Two or three times I brought the matter under the notice of the Chief Commissioner, who pointed out to me that, in the public interests, and in view of the whole position, it was impossible for him to do more. The Chief Commissioner, no doubt, would like to have done more.

Mr. MCGOWEN: The man was killed in the execution of his duty!

Mr. WADDELL: He was on the road to his duty. In regard to the hon. member for Burrangong, it is only a few months ago since, twice or three times, I brought under the notice of the Chief Commissioner the matter of getting a better railway service for Grenfell.

Mr. BURGESS: They never got it, though!

Mr. WADDELL: That was not my fault. As Minister, I make no difference as to whether the hon. member is

sitting on that side of the House, or whether it is my own electorate. In making representations to the Chief Commissioner, I try to be absolutely impartial and fair. As regards the Chief Commissioner writing to me—the hon. gentleman has tried to make something out of that—in a friendly strain, is it an unnatural thing that a man I am speaking to every day about matters, and discussing them, should, in a case of this sort, write direct to me? In cases affecting other electorates and other hon. members, the Chief Commissioner has written to me in the same way, giving me information. I can assure hon. gentlemen that if they think the Chief Commissioner has given any special consideration to me in this matter on account of it affecting my electorate, they are entirely in error. There was nothing of that kind. The Chief Commissioner simply did what any other man in his place would do. As far as hon. members are concerned, I shall continue to do in the future as I have done in the past, and if any hon. gentleman puts a request before me in connection with the management of the railways, I shall be only too glad to put it before the commissioner, and ask him to give it his best consideration; but I cannot go any further than that. I cannot show any expression of opinion adverse to that officer if he does not agree to anything I recommend, nor can I attempt anything in the way of pressure to get him to do what he thinks should not be done in the public interest; because I know that I am not supposed by act of Parliament to do that, and I know that, if I did it, the Chief Commissioner would give me my answer very quickly by telling me that he is responsible for managing the railways, and not I. In regard to the matter brought forward by the hon. member for Cootamundra in connection with the curtailment of the railway service generally, hon. gentlemen, I am sure, wish to be reasonable, and they will see at once that, in the first place, the strike occurred very suddenly. No one expected it. The Chief Commissioner had no warning whatever, such as we have usually had in the case of other strikes, so that we could have laid by a large stock of coal, which would have enabled us to

carry on for a long time. The consequence was, that the position became a very serious one within a week or so after the strike took place; and, under those circumstances, not knowing where he was to get his future supplies of coal from—knowing that it would take a considerable time to get them from Japan, or England, or Natal, or India, or anywhere else—not knowing when he would be able to get relief in that way, hon. members will see at once that the Chief Commissioner was in a difficult position, and the Government realised it, too, and he acted only as a sensible man would, under the circumstances. Rather than go on with the full service, and suddenly stop in a short time, both the Government and the Chief Commissioner thought it much wiser to curtail the service, and be able to carry on for a much longer period, until we would probably get relief from some quarter or another.

Mr. BEEBY: Where has the Chief Commissioner got the coal from?

Mr. WADDELL: We are getting coal from different sources.

Mr. BEEBY: Where?

Mr. WADDELL: From two or three small mines, and also from the two mines started by the men at Newcastle. Hon. members will see that, under the circumstances, it was impossible for the Chief Commissioner or the Government to do anything else; and the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Cootamundra and other hon. gentlemen opposite, if they had been members of the Government, with the responsibility of seeing the affairs of New South Wales carried on, would, under similar circumstances, have done exactly the same thing. If the Government had attempted to work the mines as hon. members opposite suggest, the men would in all probability have struck just the same, or would have refused to work. All this talk by hon. gentlemen opposite, trying to make out that the Government could have carried on a full service, is mere make-believe.

Mr. PETERS (Deniliquin) [1.31 a.m.]: I sympathise, to a very great extent, with the remarks of the hon. member for Burrangong. I have a personal knowledge of the three districts referred to.

[Mr. Waddell.

While I acquit the Minister of any blame in the matter, I do not hold with an hon. gentleman who interjected the other night that it was not worth while being Minister for Railways if you could not get an extra train service for your electorate. While I want to acquit the Minister of doing anything personal in his own interests, I say that, from a comparative point of view, the town of Young, and much more so the town of Temora, are entitled to special consideration far before Cowra. I admit Cowra is a populous town, with a fair district around it; but the producing capability of Cowra cannot for a moment compare with that of Young, and it does not come within "coo-ee" of Temora. There are only three trains a week being run to the most important wheat-producing centres in the state. Temora is swamping up all the storage room; wheat is being brought in by dozens of teams every day, and it cannot be removed by rail. Temora can produce 100 bags of wheat to one bag produced by Cowra. Where is the justification for special consideration of Cowra, when important centres like Young and Temora are absolutely disregarded? I do not want to blame the Minister for being successful in that case; but I hope he will be able to impress on the Chief Commissioner the importance of, first of all, serving the places which really matter in the affairs of the state. If the Minister has not that power, this debate may have the effect of opening the Chief Commissioner's eyes to the facts. He is very unapproachable if members want to meet him; but if he is going to act in this way, it should be brought home to him here, if nowhere else, that he is not managing the railways in the best interests of the state, or of the railways themselves. The revenue-producing centres are being absolutely neglected in this crisis, and the only district served with special railway facilities is Cowra, which does not matter either way, from a producer's point of view.

An Hon. Member: Why do you not make these representations to the commissioner?

Mr. PETERS: I could not get within "coo-ee" of him.

Mr. WADDELL: You have not taken the trouble to put them before me!

Mr. PETERS: I admit that. I am not making any reflection on the Minister.

Mr. WADDELL: I do not understand the English language if you are not!

Mr. PETERS: As the hon. member succeeded so well in the case of Cowra, I hope he will succeed in the cases I have brought before him.

Mr. J. STOREY: If I were Minister, I would want a concession, too!

Mr. PETERS: If I were Minister, I would probably get a special concession for my district; but I am sure it would be warranted just as the Minister's is, and just as is every other case we are bringing before us to-night. Cowra is entitled to a regular service, and so are Temora and Young; and the balance is in favour of Temora and Young. I want to draw attention to another interruption of service, which the Secretary for Public Works might well take notice of—and that is in regard to the Narrandera-Finley line. That is the only line tapping that part of the Riverina. The Minister cries out every now and then about trade going to Melbourne.

Mr. C. A. LEE: What has that to do with it?

Mr. PETERS: Everything. The Government are forcing trade there every day. They have to carry the mails by coach from Narrandera now on three days of the week. Does the hon. gentleman think that the Government are assisting Sydney in that way? That portion, as well as every other portion of the state, has had a good season for the first time for two years. Everybody is harvesting wheat and cutting hay, and wants transport facilities, which at the crucial time are being hung up. There is no justification whatever for the commissioners interrupting the train service to any part of the country districts, and if there is anything at all in the "clap-trap" that we have heard here, and seen in the daily press day after day, in regard to the inability of the Government to procure coal, and being compelled to secure it from Japan and other countries, I say that the people ought to realise what type of a Government they have, when

we have coal-mines situated on state property—coal-mines discovered by Government boring —

Mr. C. A. LEE: I rise to order. Are the hon. gentleman's remarks relevant? Is the hon. gentleman entitled to bring forward grievances which cover the whole question of coal-supply?

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Motions of adjournment open up a very wide field for discussion, and I do not see that I can rule the hon. gentleman out of order.

Mr. PETERS: The excuse of the Government is, that they were unable to procure sufficient coal. When we have coal right at our doors, and they are unable to secure it, the people can only blame the Government, who are not strong enough to meet the situation and secure coal. There is no excuse for the commissioners under that head at all. I hope that the commissioners will see fit to restore the train services in the country. If the statement we see published in the daily press to the effect that the commissioners have a sufficiency of coal is correct, I hope the Government will realise that there is no further excuse for withholding the ordinary train service from the country districts where producers are badly in need of it. —I do not know what object could have been gained at any time by interrupting the tram and train services. The commissioners, had they been against the wall, and short of coal, would have had a much stronger case, and the Government would have had a much stronger case, if the people were suddenly brought face to face with a cessation of train and tram services. If the Government intended to influence the people by interrupting the train services when it was not necessary, I trust that by this time they have recognised the utter failure of the movement, and that the full train services will be restored.

Mr. G. A. JONES (The Gwydir) [1.41 a.m.]: I do not find fault with the town of Cowra for obtaining a restoration of the daily train service. I rather congratulate the townspeople upon the success that has attended the efforts of the representative of the district. I wish, however, to bring under notice the position of the Inverell to Moree service,

which has been cut down to three days per week. A very big harvest is being garnered in that district, and a large amount of traffic is likely to be lost to the railways if the reduced service is maintained for any lengthy period.

Mr. WADDELL: If the hon. member will explain matters in a letter, I will undertake to put the case before the Chief Commissioner!

Mr. G. A. JONES: I have already written to the Colonial Treasurer on behalf of the Inverell Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. WADDELL: I have not yet received the letter!

Mr. G. A. JONES: There are certain seasons of the year when the railway service should be fully maintained. Inverell is a big wheat-growing district, and also a late-wool district, and the wheat and wool will be coming down together from now on to the end of January or February. I congratulate the Colonial Treasurer upon having been able to obtain a reply from the Chief Railway Commissioner. I wrote to that gentleman on the 28th September, and I have not yet received a reply. It is remarkable that he should refrain from replying to letters sent him by some hon. members whilst making a ready response to communications sent in by others. I represent a portion of the state of New South Wales and naturally, when requested by public bodies or by a number of electors in the constituency, I forward communications or write letters, voicing their wants, and the Railway Department is the only public department which has declined to send replies direct to me, or in some cases not to reply at all. If the Chief Railway Commissioner can go out of his way to write a personal letter to the hon. member for Belubula, I do not see why he cannot do the same to me or any other member. I trust the Minister will see the necessity of pointing out to the Chief Railway Commissioner that every member of Parliament, as a representative of the taxpayers of this country, is entitled to reasonable consideration at the hands of the gentleman who to-day is king of our railway system.

Mr. DACEY: Haul him up before the bar of the House!

[Mr. G. A. Jones.

Mr. G. A. JONES: I do not want to haul him up before the bar of the House. I am addressing my remarks to the Minister for Railways, and my request is, I think, a reasonable one. I want, in conclusion, to ask the Minister, in view of the fact that the wheat crop in my electorate will be a very large one, and in view also of what I have said about that particular branch line, if he will make special representations to the Chief Railway Commissioner, so as to get a daily service or a reasonable amount of railway communication restored, which would give the large number of settlers who have been placed in that important district by the Government, and the large number of other people living there, every facility for getting their produce to market.

Mr. JAMES: I move:

That the question be now put.

Question—That the question be now put—put. The House divided:

Ayes, 31; noes, 23; majority, 8.

AYES.

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| Ball, R. T. | Lonsdale, E. |
| Barton, C. H. | McCoy, R. W. W. |
| Briner, G. S. | McFarlane, J. |
| Broughton, E. C. V. | Millard, W. |
| Brown, W. | Moore, S. W. |
| Collins, A. E. | Moxham, T. R. |
| Davidson, R. | Nobbs, J. |
| Donaldson, R. T. | Oakes, C. W. |
| Fallick, J. | Onslow, Col. J. W. M. |
| Fitzpatrick, J. C. L. | Perry, J. |
| Gilbert, O. | Price, R. A. |
| Hindmarsh, G. T. | Waddell, T. |
| Hogue, J. A. | Wood, W. H. |
| James, A. G. F. | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Latimer, W. F. | Hunt, J. C. |
| Lee, C. A. | Miller, J. |

NOES.

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|-------------------|------------------|
| Beeby, G. S. | McGarry, P. |
| Burgess, G. A. | McNeill, J. |
| Cann, J. H. | Meehan, J. C. |
| Carmichael, A. C. | Mercer, J. B. |
| Dacey, J. R. | Miller, G. T. C. |
| Estell, J. | Nicholson, J. B. |
| Grahame, W. C. | Page, F. J. |
| Griffith, Arthur | Scobie, R. |
| Hollis, R. | Storey, J. |
| Holman, W. A. | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Jones, G. A. | MacDonell, D. |
| Lynch, J. P. | Peters, H. J. F. |

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the House do now adjourn—put. The House divided:

Ayes, 31; noes, 24; majority, 7.

AYES.

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|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ball, R. T. | McCoy, R. W. W. |
| Barton, C. H. | McFarlane, J. |
| Briner, G. S. | Millard, W. |
| Broughton, E. C. V. | Miller, J. |
| Brown, W. | Moore, S. W. |
| Collins, A. E. | Moxham, T. R. |
| Donaldson, R. T. | Nobbs, J. |
| Fallick, J. | Oakes, C. W. |
| Fitzpatrick, J. C. L. | Onslow, Col. J. W. M. |
| Gilbert, O. | Perry, J. |
| Hogue, J. A. | Price, R. A. |
| Hunt, J. C. | Waddell, T. |
| James, A. G. F. | Wood, W. H. |
| Latimer, W. F. | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Lee, C. A. | Davidson, R. |
| Lonsdale, E. | Hindmarsh, G. T. |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Beeby, G. S. | McNeill, J. |
| Burgess, G. A. | Meehan, J. C. |
| Cann, J. H. | Mercer, J. B. |
| Carmichael, A. C. | Miller, G. T. C. |
| Dacey, J. R. | Nicholson, J. B. |
| Dooley, J. | Page, F. J. |
| Estell, J. | Peters, H. J. F. |
| Griffith, Arthur | Scobie, R. |
| Hollis, R. | Storey, J. |
| Holman, W. A. | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Jones, G. A. | Grahame, W. C. |
| MacDonell, D. | Lynch, J. P. |
| McGarry, P. | |

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 1.56 a.m.
(Wednesday).

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 15 December, 1909.

Closer Settlement (North Logan Estate)—Defamation (Amendment) Bill—Paddington Streets Extension Bill.

The PRESIDENT took the chair

CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

NORTH LOGAN ESTATE.

The Hon. J. HUGHES rose to move:

That, pursuant and subject to the provisions of the Closer Settlement (Amendment) Act, 1907, this House approves of the Governor resuming an area of 11,511 acres, more or less, of private land, situate near Cowra, being part of the North Logan estate within the 15-mile limit of the approved line of railway from Cowra to Canowindra, included within an area covered by a proclamation of intended acquisition published in the *Government Gazette* of 5th May, 1909, together with any improvements thereon.

He said: This resumption is not one on which the parties have agreed, therefore the Government will have to resume under the provisions of the act. The estate is well situated as regards railway communication, being from 7 to 16 miles from Cowra station, 224 miles from Sydney, and the railway communication will be considerably improved when the line from Cowra to Canowindra, now under construction, intersecting the property, is completed. There is no natural surface water supply, but on a portion of the estate an abundant supply can be obtained at a depth of about 40 feet by sinking, and there are good catchments for tanks or dams; but in places the soil is not retentive, and puddle trenches are necessary. The average rainfall is about 25½ inches. There are about 11,000 acres of agricultural land, and about 500 acres of land suitable for grazing only. The agricultural land is mostly red soil, varying from light to clayey loam, with clay-subsoil; the grazing land consists of rocky ridges and stony outcrops, but when improved it will be fair grazing country. The staple product would be wheat—the average crop is estimated at 14 bushels—but the land is suitable for mixed farming, and the cultivation of oats, maize, and barley. The land for acquisition may be suitably subdivided into about thirty two farms, ranging from 220 to 610 acres, the average area being about 360 acres. The board value the part of the estate for resumption, including all improvements, but excluding the railway enhancement, at £5 per acre for 1,222½ acres, and £4 6s. 6d. per acre for 10,288½ acres (£50,610 1s. 10½d. in all). The values, with the increment due to the railway, are £5 15s. and £5 per acre respectively. The improvements, inclusive of ringbarking and scrubbing, which have not been separately valued, are valued at £2,099 5s. 6d. The board could not arrive at any amicable settlement as to the price of the estate. The owners were originally offered by the board £5 10s. and £4 15s. per acre for the two areas proposed to be acquired. These values include an amount for railway enhancement, because at that time the bill for the construction of the railway from Cowra to Canowindra had not been introduced or passed. The original