

what they may never find, whereas, if we placed a substantial tax on gold found, no one would feel it, and the colony would derive a large revenue. I will not detain the House longer.

THE HON. R. W. HARDEY: I will just give my ideas on a few of the heads in the Governor's Speech. In the first place, I think it is a cause of congratulation that this colony has increased in population in the way stated; but, while we are getting a flow of population, we must endeavour to retain a good percentage of the new-comers in the colony, so that people shall not merely come and procure gold and go away to spend it in other parts of the world. We wish to get as many people here as possible, and get them to be *bonâ fide* settlers of Western Australia. Without population we cannot show that progress we ought to do. With regard to coal, I certainly think, with the Hon. Mr. Crowder, that the Government ought to leave no stone unturned to test the Collie seam and others, as coal is quite as valuable to the colony as gold. With regard to the loan, I am not afraid of this £1,500,000 the Government propose to raise. I hope they will not want to borrow more for some time to come; but there is no doubt as to our being justified in going on the market at the present time, particularly as the credit of the colony is so good. With regard to the railway to Coolgardie, I am certainly in favour of the line being extended in that direction; but it has occurred to me whether it is a good policy to put down now a good permanent line to that particular centre. I have given some consideration to the matter lately, and have thought whether it might not be better to put down a lighter and cheaper railway. I have thought more of this idea since the discovery of the Londonderry reef, because we do not know, as yet, which is the proper centre to take a permanent line to. A cheap line could easily be replaced by a permanent one if the circumstances warranted it. I think it would be a good thing to put down a permanent line to Cue. As to a railway to the tinfields, until I hear more in its favour I shall not support it. My own experience of the tinfields was a woeful one, as I spent my money and lost it. It is gratifying that the harbour works are

progressing in the way stated; and I agree with the Hon. Mr. Henty, that it will be a grand thing if we can have a harbour of refuge on the West coast, where vessels can run to in a storm and be perfectly safe. I am glad to see the reference to the conservation of water which, in regard to the Eastern goldfields, is certainly very necessary indeed; and I certainly think, also, that we should spend a fairly large amount of money in boring for artesian water. If we strike artesian water, it will not only serve the goldfields, but a great proportion of the country which is first-class for agricultural and pastoral purposes could then be utilised. I am glad to see the reference to the opening of roads, and I think main roads ought to be laid out at once, and not left until after the land has been surveyed, and then have to be bought back, as heretofore. As to the Land Bank, I want to learn more of the subject; but if I can give it my support, I certainly will do so, because farmers and others engaged upon the soil do need some assistance.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I did not know that it would be considered the duty of hon. members to express their views on the speech of His Excellency, or I might have given the matter some consideration; but I will do my best to give my opinion on some of the subjects mentioned. I think we have reason to congratulate ourselves on having a Ministry who have taken the interests of the country so fully into consideration and have proposed measures of so great magnitude. It is the duty of this Council, I take it, to consider these measures very carefully, as they will necessitate a very large expenditure of money. I, for my part, do not consider we are justified in borrowing so large a sum, unless we see some prospect of paying off the debt in the future, as well as the interest for the present. No doubt the colony is progressing, but it seems to me an enormous sum to borrow, and I would have thought better of the proposal had the amount been less and there had been a fewer number of works. Hon. members should be careful to satisfy themselves before approving of the works that they will be reproductive. In considering the proposals, I think the line from Southern Cross to Coolgardie will be a repro-

ductive work. The rich finds there make it clear, I think, that this line will pay beyond others that have been proposed. This line also will be so much towards the completion of the trans-continental railway, so that, under any circumstances, the line will not be entirely wasted. I do not look on goldfields as resources of a permanent nature. They may be rich for a year or two, but in our instance we have satisfactory assurances that there is an enormous extent of gold-bearing country, extending 200 miles east to Coolgardie, to Dundas Hill on the South, and to Kimberley on the North; therefore, we shall not be incurring too great a risk in building this line. The line to the Murchison is double the distance of that proposed to Coolgardie, and, before it is constructed, hon. members ought to be afforded some information as to the character of the country it will pass through. The next important point is the line proposed from Donnybrook to Bridgetown. From my experience of the country, I would say the land can never be made an agricultural country, although it might become a fruit country; and I think we should be very careful before we approve of that work, unless it can be shown that by further railway extension the land can be made reproductive. With respect to the line to the coalfields, if it cannot be shown there is an unlimited supply of good coal, it will be our duty to pause before we approve of the work. I quite agree with the Hon. Mr. Haynes when he speaks of no mention having been made of a line or road from Dundas to Esperance Bay. That portion of the country has been most unjustly treated. There seems to be an idea here that making such a line would be the means of diverting the trade from this part of the colony, and this is considered to be undesirable. I think this is a mistaken idea, and an unfair idea, because many go to the fields by this route who would not incur the expense entailed of going from here. Esperance Bay is the nearest point to Dundas, and with a view to opening up that field it is fair that something should be done towards laying out the road. It can make no difference to this part of the colony, when once the people arrive at the goldfields, from which side they get there. The question of

the Land Bank is a subject for serious consideration. I can see many advantages to be derived from a bank from which farmers can obtain money. If it means a bank from which they can get sums of money to enable them to improve their holdings, it will be advisable to have it, but it will have to be well handled. Notwithstanding the cry of land being locked up in the hands of a few holders, if at any time any holder asks for the Crown price of the land, *plus* a fair sum for improvements, he cannot get it. I know an instance of a very desirable block of land being sold, with £2,000 worth of improvements upon it, for under £1 per acre; so that we must be careful how the advances are made. I know if I wanted to sell my holdings, and asked a fair value for the improvements, I could not get anything like their value. I do not think I need say anything further just now. I have the welfare of the country at heart, and I hope hon. members will give me credit for doing my best while I am here.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: In saying a few words in support of the motion before the House, I might point out that the Speech is of such a cheering nature that there is very little to say, except of a congratulatory character. In regard to railways, the line to Coolgardie is very much needed, and will receive my strong support. It will not only be of great advantage to the fields, but will be the means of opening up the pastoral lands which, from my own observation and the observation of others, I know are in the vicinity of Coolgardie. There are, I believe, hundreds of thousands of acres of good pastoral land, and it is simply a matter of water conservation—which I am glad to see the Government has taken in hand—in order to bring them into occupation. There is one work I should have liked to have seen included, and that is a branch line from the Williams — from the South-Western Railway. Although we have the Great Southern railway, portions of the district are not served by it. If we had such a railway, it would serve large numbers of settlers who are now cut off from communication. With regard to borrowing this amount of £1,500,000, it is a large sum of money, but it is necessary we should have it if we are to keep pace with the demand for the