

apology is necessary for the time I have taken up, and I thank members for the kindly consideration they have given me.

Mr. W. C. ANQWIN (East Fremantle) : The Governor's Speech opened with an apology for not calling Parliament together in February. That apology was made under a very limited excuse. The announcement that a session was to be held in February is one of the worst advertisements this State ever had. There is not the least doubt in my mind that statement was the means of keeping away a very large number of subscribers from the public to our loan. Any person giving the matter thought must have realised that to call a special session of Parliament together for the purpose of raising the small amount of revenue that the Treasurer stated would be raised—such a statement going before the world would, and did, in my opinion, act adversely to the interests of the State. This to my mind showed that, at that time—this was in December last—the Ministry did not realise the position of responsibility which they held. If they had done so, after passing the large Loan Estimates through the House, they would not have made the statement that a special session would be necessary in February. I have no doubt that some of those who supported the Ministry had in the meantime pointed out that by holding a special session in February Western Australia would fare worse than we should do by leaving the matter alone. Then it was stated that the Government intended to hold the ordinary session in May. A postponement was made for the purpose of allowing some of our Ministers to attend the Conference of Premiers. I may say that I differ from some of those in Opposition in what they have stated on this question. I believe if Ministers had not attended that Conference Western Australia would have fared worse than we shall do under Federation. I believe that by constantly drilling into those in authority in the other States the necessity of giving special facilities to Western Australia, by that means only we shall get the dues to which this State is justly entitled. I am pleased indeed that the

Premier did see his way to attend the Conference in Brisbane, and I hope the result will be of benefit to the State in the future. I deeply regret the antagonism taken up by a number of members in this House to Federation. At the time the referendum was taken I was personally opposed to entering the Federal compact with the other States. I believed then it would be detrimental to the interests of the State for many years if Western Australia federated, more especially in regard to our industries. But the people of the State decided by a very large majority—and most members in the House believe that the majority should rule—that it was to the interests of Australia as a whole that this State should enter the Federation. Seeing this is so, we should give Federation a fair trial before we take any steps to endeavour to break the bonds now uniting us. I cannot help drawing attention to remarks made by a representative in another place who took every opportunity, more particularly around Fremantle, to place before the people the conditions to be gained from entering the Federal Union. He was out night after night telling the people that they would have almost free living; but we are now told by this member that some of those who took such a firm stand in 1899 are among those who wish to break the bonds that now unite us. The member for Swan (Mr. Gull), as well as the member of another place to whom I have been referring, has told us why there is so much antagonism to Federation. The member of another place said, "I regret that an old friend of this country in the person of Sir John Forrest is the person who has brought down these proposals which will have such a detrimental effect on this State." He was speaking then of the taking over of our State debts and other matters that are likely to act detrimentally to Western Australia. But a few moments afterwards he showed his true colours, and while he regretted that a statesman like Sir John Forrest would bring down measures detrimental to this State, he said if it had not been for Sir John Forrest we should be disfranchised in the Federal Parliament.

I however think it would be better for this State to be disfranchised in the Federal Parliament rather than have a person there representing us and bringing down measures which are detrimental to this State. That shows that the one objection raised against Federation so far as the future is concerned—according to the member for Swan and the gentleman I have referred to—is that a majority of the people chose to send to the Federal Parliament members in whom they could put the most trust. I notice it is the intention of the Government to do their utmost to open up the North-West portion of the State. I believe with the Government that it is advisable to try an experiment in that direction and I think, with the Minister for Mines, that it is necessary for the Government to try if possible to give cheaper shipping facilities to that great district. We have to realise that not long ago an agreement was entered into—it was condemned considerably at the time on account of the subsidy attached thereto—which was the means of reducing the fares somewhat. We find that last year the Treasurer almost shook hands with himself that he had been the means of giving greater shipping facilities to the North-West coast without much additional charge to the State. In looking into this matter carefully we find that instead of that action doing good to the State there is a probability of it being a loss. We find that the shipping combine—that is the term those engaged in the shipping trade to the North-West are commonly known by—were charging to take general cargo to Carnarvon 32s. 6d. per ton, but another firm came in and said, "If you will subsidise us to the amount of £1,000 per annum, we will reduce the charge for general cargo to 20s. per ton." No doubt, subsidising this steamboat to go to Carnarvon will be the means of increasing trade to Carnarvon, and it will also be the means of inducing the Government to take steps to subsidise steamers to go farther north than Carnarvon. But the Government then sent for those connected with the shipping combination, and we find a gentleman by the name of Mr. Moxon

and a gentleman by the name of Mr. Carter and others waiting in deputation on the Government. They said: "We will reduce the charges to the people of Carnarvon for 12 months to the sum of 20s. per ton without subsidy." That is, all except the Adelaide Steamship Company who had the mail contract. We see that it paid them to remove any opposition that then existed, because once the opposition was removed it would be the means of prices being brought up again. I thought I would strike a comparison between the fares charged by the shipping companies trading to the North-West ports of Western Australia and the fares charged by the shipping companies trading north of Brisbane on the Queensland coast, and I find a considerable difference. The fares from Fremantle to Geraldton 210 miles are, single saloon £2, return £3 10s. The figures are supplied on the Government file of the 12th July, 1906. From Brisbane to Bundaberg 272 miles, the fares are single saloon £1 2s. 6d., return £1 15s., just half the fares from Fremantle to Geraldton. These are the figures I have drawn up. Fremantle to Sharks Bay 410 miles, single saloon £4 10s., return £7 10s.; Brisbane to Rockhampton 472 miles, single saloon £2, return £3; Fremantle to Carnarvon Roads 484 miles, single saloon £5 10s., return £9; Brisbane to Mackay 540 miles, single saloon £4 10s., return £6 10s.; Fremantle to Ashburton Roads 764 miles, single saloon £7 15s., return £13; Brisbane to Townsville 745 miles, single saloon £5, return £9; Fremantle to Cossack Roads 944 miles, single saloon £9 5s., return £15; Brisbane to Port Douglas 943 miles, single saloon £7, return £11. Port Hedland is the port where it is the intention of the Government I believe to start a new railway to Marble Bar, and no doubt in the near future it will be a port largely availed of not only by passengers but also for goods traffic, so that it will be necessary if it is the intention of the Government to open up the North-West in the manner stated, that fares for passengers and rates for cargo should be brought down to the proper rate so that people will have proper

facilities to carry the goods to Port Hedland to use the railway. Port Hedland is 1,004 miles from Fremantle; the single saloon fare from Fremantle to Port Hedland is £10 10s., and the return is £17 10s., while from Brisbane to Cooktown, 1,008 miles, the single saloon is £7 10s., and the return £12 15s. So it goes on continually right up to the whole of the coast to Wyndham, showing that the passenger rates on the Western Australian coast are from one-third to one-half more than the fares charged on the Queensland coast. The rate for carrying cargo from Fremantle to Port Hedland is 45s. per ton, whereas from Brisbane to Cooktown it is 30s. per ton. With these charges in their minds I hope the members of the Ministry will go into the matter carefully with the Minister for Mines, and I trust that his wishes in regard to this matter will be put into force. If we wish to develop the trade of Western Australia or if we wish to retain our trade, the Government should subsidise a line of steamers on our coasts, but I would rather prefer that they should take up their own shipping and run it in the same manner as we run our railways. There is no doubt that every convenience in regard to charges goes to those who trade outside the State, because we know a large portion of the trade of the northern ports comes from Singapore, and that a large portion of the trade of our southern ports comes from Adelaide. Consequently if we wish to develop the State it is necessary we should go carefully into the shipping charges to the ports on our coasts. We have heard a good deal during this debate in regard to agricultural development, and the Honorary Minister has received a good deal of patting on the back. The Minister reminds me very much of a child with too many toys. He takes one for a little while and suddenly leaves it and goes to something else. Consequently, while one gives him pleasure for a short period, we find it thrown away for something new. I only hope the Minister will keep at one of these things he has in view to which I regret no particular attention has been given in the Gover-

nor's Speech. I refer to cool storage in connection with the port of Fremantle. It is one of the toys I hope he will play with until he has carried it into effect. The Minister referred to this matter very carefully. He stated that everything he could do he wished to carry into effect. I can only say that some four or five years ago plans were drawn, and I believe tenders were called for the construction of abattoirs. I believe the plans were put on one side for a little while until a superintendent of abattoirs was appointed. That officer has been appointed now close on two years, but we find no mention in the Governor's Speech of the construction of abattoirs for the metropolitan area. We know that there are to be abattoirs at Kalgoorlie, and that according to the Press reports they are required. But they are also required in the metropolitan area, and while we have heard so much in regard to cool storage plants that are to be placed in almost every port, there is no statement whatever in the Governor's Speech that any step is to be taken in connection with the matter this year. I trust that if the Government are genuine in their promise to provide cold storage for the export trade they will take the matter in hand, put it on the Estimates this year and provide cool storage at Fremantle. It is just as well to finish with Fremantle while I am on it. I wish at this stage to congratulate the members on the Opposition side on the pressure they brought on the Government to carry out their wishes in regard to the construction of the Fremantle dock. I was rather disappointed in regard to the site. [*Mr. Bolton: It is a good site.*] At the same time I realise that it is the site chosen by the engineer, and I think it is the duty of any member of this House when an engineer decides the best place to carry out a work of this description, to try not to raise any obstacles to the work being carried into effect on that site thus chosen. The member for North Perth brought in an outside engineer, but I maintain that no man should know more about the requirements of this port than

one connected with its work for many years. In these circumstances I wish to assure the Government and the Minister for Works that so far as I am concerned I shall do everything possible to assist in carrying their proposal into effect. [Mr. Scaadan: You will have to wait for a general election before you get a dock.] Members on the Opposition side are so anxious to have this work carried out, that I trust the Minister for Works will bring in his Bill at once. While I agree with the necessity for the construction of a dock at Fremantle, at the same time I trust the Government will keep the control of the dock once it is constructed. I disagree entirely to handing over to boards or trusts any properties for control. I maintain the Government can control its work far better than any board they may bring into existence. During the past 12 months the Government have found it necessary to call on the Harbour Trust to raise revenue at Fremantle. We know that the revenue derived to-day from the port of Fremantle would not have been raised had it not been for the pressure brought by the Government. It shows clearly that as far as the control of the Harbour Trust is concerned it is necessary that the Government should have some power in the control of the Trust's funds. We know that the Harbour Trust if they could have avoided making these charges would have done so. It was expressed very clearly in the columns of the Press at the time that the public were to bear in mind that it was not the Harbour Trust who were enforcing the extra charges, but it was the Government who must take the whole of the responsibility. The Government had used their power under the Act, but if the Harbour Trust had had their way, the charges would not have been made. Those are not the actual words but it is the meaning of the paragraph, inspired no doubt by the Harbour Trust, appearing over the name of the Trust's secretary. There is another reason why the Harbour Trust should not have control over a work such as this dock. I refer to the unnecessary expenditure incurred I believe with the permission of the Labour Government

who were then in power, but on the advice tendered by the Harbour Trust and on the advice of those who called themselves experts and knew the requirements of the port. I am speaking of the cranes and electric capstans which have been erected at very large cost at Fremantle. I believe that the electric capstans are going to be removed from the wharves; they have been of no use, and have really been white elephants and consequently a great loss to this State. According to the commercial men of the port, the cranes erected on the wharves will not earn the interest on capital for many years to come. When the work of the dock is to be carried out we should not put the control in the hands of such a body as the Fremantle Harbour Trust. Just before the last elections for the Legislative Council we found that the chairman of that Trust, who is the saviour of the State according to some members, wanted to resign his position; the Government of the day thought that the State would go to ruin if we lost that gentleman, and they fell on his neck and almost kissed him, pointing out to him the great loss the State would sustain if he retired. That was nothing more than a ruse in connection with the then approaching Parliamentary elections in order to show to the State or to the people of Fremantle what a fine man they had, and how wrong it would be if he were allowed to retire from the position. That gentleman was returned to Parliament. A few months ago he again expressed his desire to resign the position and the Government again fell on his neck and asked him not to resign, and said if he would not they would give him a commission (he was about to visit the old country) to travel all over the world, see the various ports, and obtain all the information he possibly could in regard to the management of harbours. [The Premier: At his own expense.] I was about to say that it would be very interesting to know how much the State was going to pay for this inspection, but I will now take the Premier's word for it that he is not to be paid. At all events, I only hope that such is the case. We have in England to-day an experienced con-

sulting engineer, and if it is necessary for any information to be obtained with regard to the harbours of this State it would be far better that it should be received from the responsible officer rather than from a man who has no responsibility whatever. [Mr. Bath: He takes all the kudos for the good work performed by the secretary and officers of the Trust.] I noticed also in the Governor's Speech that the Government intend to bring down a Bill to amend the electoral laws. All will realise that what is required in regard to this question is a Bill that everyone can understand, and that the simpler it is made the better. We have been told that under the new Bill there is to be some system of preferential voting. I will suggest to the Minister in charge of the Bill that he should immediately place on the table of the House a copy of the proposed new measure so that members may become conversant with it. It is very essential that members should be thoroughly acquainted with the measure before they have to deal with it in the House. We not only desire to deal with the purifying of the rolls, but we also want to purify those persons who take part in elections. [The Premier: The candidates too?] It is necessary to bring into effect a clause having for its object the purifying of persons who take part in elections, so that care can be taken that those persons who have been appointed to honourable positions under commission by the Government and do not carry out their work in a pure, upright and just manner, can be prevented from continuing their dirty work. I also notice that it is the intention of the Government to bring down a Bill to provide for the better supervision of the liquor traffic, and that in this measure there is to be embodied the principle of local option. The Premier when speaking at Bunbury dealt with this matter, and stated that the Government would bring in a Bill for local option. We were subsequently told at Kalgoorlie that this Bill was also intended to provide for a system of Sunday opening of public houses. [Mr. Scaddan: Hear, hear.] I trust members will not take such a backward step.

Mr. Scaddan: I hope they will.

The Attorney General: Why do you hope that?

Mr. ANGWIN: While I have been in this House I have heard a good deal, especially from members who represent the goldfields, as to preventing Sunday labour. I trust that those who are trying their utmost to prohibit it will not agree to open the hotels on Sundays and thereby increase the labour of a large number of persons.

Mr. Scaddan: You decrease Sunday labour if you have limited hours during which the hotels are open.

Mr. ANGWIN: The hon. member has never been in places where they have certain hours during which hotels are open on Sundays.

The Attorney General: Do you believe in the Sunday thirst?

Mr. ANGWIN: I believe there is a proper way of treating it, but that is not by having the hotels open on Sundays. I also see that it is intended to amend the Public Service Act. In dealing with this question I regret very much that in the past the Public Service Act has not been administered as I think it should have been. It is a great pity that those connected with the asylums and gaols are not brought under the provisions of the Act. Before a man can be engaged as a warder at an asylum he has to undergo three years training and to hold a certificate for competency. Until he receives that he is not ranked as a warder, and in such circumstances I maintain that it should not be at the disposal of any one person, also a public service officer, to dismiss a person or to inflict penalties without giving him any right of appeal. I have known cases where the penalties have been altogether too heavy, several instances having occurred where girls have been fined £5 for very slight errors in their duties, and yet their salary only amounts to between £36 and £40 a year. All such officers should be given the right to be placed under the Public Service Act. We know very well that a great complaint in regard to the Act is that there is not an opportunity afforded to persons in authority of giving positions to their friends. For the sake of the Public Ser-

vice and for the sake even of the Ministers having control of the various departments, it is advisable to keep all appointments clear from political influence, and this can be done by placing all branches of the service under the Public Service Commissioner. The next item dealt with is that with regard to the control of health. I was hoping that the Minister in charge of the Act would bring down a consolidating measure this year so that the whole management of the health matters could be discussed. We should wipe away the incubus called the Central Board of Health. It would be far better instead of going to the expense of having a number of lay members appointed from outside the public service to positions on the Central Board of Health, to select additional inspectors for the Health Department, and have the whole branch managed entirely under Ministerial control. If it is necessary to have the Central Board of Health there are sufficient expert officers in the public service to form a far better board than the present one. Such a board would carry very much greater weight with the local boards and very much more good would be done. I think that the whole of the management as far as the control of health affairs is concerned, should be left to the local boards with due inspection by Government officials. If that were done the local boards would work much better. I am very glad indeed to see that the Minister intends to bring down a Bill to amend the Workers' Compensation Act. Those who come from Fremantle know well that great hardships exist in connection with the working of the Act at present.

Mr. Bath: You do not know what the amendments are yet and your compliments may be too early.

Mr. Bolton: The amendments have been foreshadowed.

Mr. ANGWIN: It is necessary that an alteration should be made in the present system, whereby if a man who is working for an employer for one day a week meets with an accident while he is on duty he can only get compensation under the Act amounting to half the wages he earns on that one day.

The Premier: Provision is made for that.

Mr. ANGWIN: It certainly needs alteration. I am going to ask the Attorney General to put a clause into the Bill so as to prohibit solicitors who will appear before the court when a case is tried, from appointing their clerks as assessors. This, I think, shows very bad taste indeed; and when we know that such things are done we should try to prohibit them. I therefore trust that in future we shall prohibit the clerks of solicitors who are bringing before the court cases under the Workers' Compensation Act from sitting as assessors. This very thing happened not long ago at Fremantle, and I regret that the award drawn up after the sitting of the court was not in accordance with the court's judgment. When a solicitor happens to be successful in a case, and draws up an award and gets his clerk to sign it, only two signatures out of three being necessary, one is led to suspect, rightly or wrongly, that everything is not so straight as it should be. I wish to draw the attention of the Minister for Works (Hon. J. Price) to a matter concerning the Fremantle water supply. Some time ago, on the outskirts of Fremantle, it was found advisable before the reticulation of the scheme was extended to levy an extra rate on persons who wished to use the water. That system obtains to-day as it did when the agreement was entered into a year or two back, when the water was first taken to the outskirts of the town. But I think the time has arrived when the whole of the Fremantle district should be put on one footing. There should be no distinction. A small property on the outskirts supplied with water from the Fremantle scheme, should be rated on exactly the same basis as a large building in the centre of the town. I realise that in a large central building very little water is used, though the charge is very high; and while the Government save in the case of large buildings, they provide also that there shall be no loss on outlying properties, which must pay a higher rate if the valuation is not in the opinion of the Government

sufficient to pay for the water at the ordinary rate.

The Minister for Works: The custom in vogue at Fremantle as regards household reticulation, is exactly the same as under all the other Government water schemes.

Mr. ANGWIN. If the Fremantle Water Scheme involved a loss to the State, I could understand the adherence to this system; but I notice from the last report, tabled the other day, that for the last half year of 1906, after paying $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. sinking fund and $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, the sum of £1,103 0s. 6d. represented a profit to the consolidated revenue. Seeing that the water scheme is profitable to the State, everyone should be rated on the same basis. If there were a loss, I should hesitate to make this request to the Minister; but we find that from 1901 until last year every year shows a handsome profit, therefore I think myself justified in asking that the same rate should be charged throughout the whole area served. The member for Greenough (Mr. Stone) referred to the manner of distributing the charities vote. Some few years ago, on every public platform, those opposed to old age pensions mentioned that the Government provided cash payments to people who found it necessary to seek State relief. If the Government will investigate this question they will find that some persons receiving relief in the shape of rations, are of such an age that a few shillings a week would be far better for them than the rations supplied by various tradesmen on orders issued by the departmental officers. I believe that office expenses could thus be considerably reduced, and greater satisfaction given to those who unfortunately have to seek relief. I have never known one instance in which relief has been refused, but cash relief has been refused and rations substituted; and I agree with the member for Greenough that the Government should see whether they cannot give cash relief in the future and as far as possible avoid rations. The Minister for Works, speaking the other night of the large areas of unused land adjoining our railways, disagreed with an interjection

to the effect that we should bring those areas into use. I maintain that throughout this State where persons who have taken up land have not carried out the compulsory conditions of improvement, it is the duty of the Government to confiscate; to put into operation the forfeiture provisions, to compel the holders to effect the improvements. It is known that around the Chapman area a little while ago a large portion of the land was repurchased for settlement; and it is known to-day that the land so purchased for agricultural settlement is being used by the people who sold it to the Government; and those people are running sheep on it, as they were prior to the sale. When the compulsory conditions are not complied with it is the duty of the Government to say, "If you do not use the land, we shall hand it over to someone who will."

The Minister for Works: Those estates at the Chapman were freehold. There were no improvement conditions attached to them.

Mr. ANGWIN: I refer to land taken up under compulsory improvement conditions.

The Premier: What have the Government done to remedy that? On every lithograph issued the date of approval of the application appears; and anyone who has a lithograph of a locality can see whether a block should be liable to forfeiture.

Mr. ANGWIN: Will that take effect in respect of lands alienated previously, or only from to-day?

The Premier: It takes effect from about six months ago.

Mr. ANGWIN: The lands of which I spoke were purchased for agricultural purposes, and I hear on the best authority that some of the land held around these areas would suffice for the settlement of over a thousand families. I have been told that it is the best wheat-growing land in the State; and I maintain that the Government should take action. If the land is being dummed and no improvements effected under the purchase conditions, I maintain that the Government should try if possible to

have the land brought under proper cultivation.

The Premier: I inquire into every case reported to me, whether or not the report is anonymous.

Mr. ANGWIN: I notice that when the Honorary Minister in charge of the Department of Agriculture was in the district he made use of these words: "It was a thousand pities that such valuable country close to railway facilities and a port should be given over to the maintenance of a few sheep." I think it is necessary that the Minister should get some information in regard to the area I have mentioned. I refer to the Bowes area, and to Appertarra, where, I have been informed on the best authority, the land has been dummied, and no improvement conditions have been carried out. I have also been told that in various parts of the State these conditions have never been fulfilled. Land has been held on condition that £1 an acre should be expended on improvements, whereas not sixpence has been expended.

The Premier: Give one instance, so that we may inquire. What is the use of vague statements? As a matter of fact, I was, two years ago, travelling over the area you mention, and it struck me the holders were not fulfilling the conditions. On my return I instructed Mr. Thompson, the Inspector of Conditional Purchases, to make a full examination and to see whether the conditions had been fulfilled. But under the conditions existing up to the new amending Land Act, a man need effect no improvements for the first eight years, except to put a ring fence round his holding.

Mr. ANGWIN: Some of this land has not even been fenced since it was subdivided. No money whatever has been expended on it. I am pleased to hear the Premier say that he will take steps.

The Premier: I have taken them.

Mr. ANGWIN: I hope they will be successful, and that a large area now lying idle adjacent to our railways will be thrown open for settlement. There will then be no necessity to place our

immigrants on land 30 or 40 miles from our railways, when we have unused land such as I have mentioned. I do not think it necessary to take up more time. I trust that the Government will at once table their new Electoral Bill, so that we may carefully study it, and I trust also that one of the first measures introduced will be a Bill for the construction of the Fremantle Dock.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at three minutes to 10 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 23rd July, 1907.

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

Prayers.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY, PRESENTATION.

Mr. PRESIDENT: In accordance with the resolution of July 11th, I presented the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor, and have received this reply:—

"I thank you for your Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament, and for your expression of loyalty to His Most Gracious Majesty the King.

F. G. D. BEDFORD, Governor."