

and that our action will tend to the further advancement of the colony. I also think it unwise to declare our opposition to what is proposed until we hear the details. We have had instances brought before us of water having been obtained by sinking and boring, and I am inclined to the opinion that we have not done enough in this direction; nor have these methods received the attention they should have done. From the knowledge I have gained I believe that sufficient water could be obtained by these means to meet our requirements, and therefore I have reason to think that more might have been done in this direction. We also know that the rainfall is sufficient to provide a supply of water if proper steps were taken to conserve it. The fact that private enterprise is willing to undertake the work is sufficient to show that there are some grounds for believing that the scheme will be a success, and I may say that, from my own knowledge of the rainfall for five or six years, I feel sure a sufficient supply can be conserved. I do not think it wise, therefore, to enter upon an expenditure such as is proposed, unless it is proved impossible to procure water by the other means I have alluded to. In travelling through that country, I have noticed how quickly the surface water disappears, and there are many places where it runs into sink holes, and this proves that, instead of running into the ocean, it runs into the soil. Therefore, it shows a likelihood of water being obtained by deep sinking or boring. With reference to the construction of railways to other goldfields, it has been proved by what has been done in the past that railways can be made cheaper than roads, and, therefore, it would be unwise to stand in the way of these other lines being carried out. I do not consider it necessary for me to dwell at length on the various items, because we shall have ample opportunity of doing so later on. We may be well satisfied with the able reply which the Hon. Mr. Briggs has made, and I can only, in conclusion, express my satisfaction at the improved position of the colony, and hope that nothing will arise to ever put us in a worse position than we are in now.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I do not propose to add to the remarks of hon.

members in connection with the death of the late Mr. Marmion, but simply to endorse every word which has been said of him, and to add one sentence: Either as a friend or as a politician, to know him was to love him. I now come to the Speech. In reference to paragraph 2, I fully endorse the remarks of the hon. the Minister for Mines, that it will be quite time enough to consider the question of federation when the matter comes up before us. We are only now proposing to appoint delegates to frame a constitution, and when the bill which is drawn up comes before us we can say aye or nay to it. As at present advised I am against this colony federating. The time has not yet come. But no harm can be done by sending delegates to take part in the framing of a constitution, so that when the time does come we shall have a bill we shared in drafting, and which we can accept. In reference to the third paragraph, I think the time has come when the goldfields should have further representation, but when the bill comes before the House we should see that the whole colony is equally represented; that one part is not neglected at the expense of another, and that the agricultural, pastoral, and mining interests are all equally represented. I come now to the important question of the Speech, that which deals with the water supply on the goldfields, and I can only repeat that it is a matter of most grave importance. No member, I think, should bind himself to an opinion in speaking to this Address-in-Reply, but should rather wait until the full details are before the House. At the same time we may make a few remarks without binding ourselves. This is a matter of grave importance, and the Government intend that there shall be a dissolution of Parliament. If that is so, why not let the whole of the details of this scheme go before the public and ascertain whether it is not possible for some other scheme to be devised? Why not let the whole question of water supply go before the country, and let us have a decision as to whether we shall borrow this large amount and increase our debt for such a scheme?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): It will take too long.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: If we are to wait three years before this supply can be



put on the fields, surely we can wait some six or eight months to see whether some other scheme cannot be devised which will lighten the debt on the colony, and also give such a supply as will last for ever. At present, I am inclined against borrowing for this purpose, and for the reason that I consider that a water supply of this magnitude should be left to private enterprise. We have heard there are already three private companies willing to take the matter up. If this scheme goes before the country, shall we not find other companies coming forward? If so, why not let them? Why should the whole colony be saddled with the debt when private companies may take the matter up?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): Parliament has already refused private enterprise.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: Parliament has not had a single application from private enterprise. The hon. member himself told us that there will be a bill to give power to undertake a scheme at Menzies.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): There was a bill introduced last year which was thrown out.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: That was only to enable private companies to come in. Was there a single company ready to undertake the work last year? Now, however, there are three companies ready to come in, and therefore I think, if the matter were left to the country, we should have many more private companies come forward and thus relieve the colony. I do not see what the hurry is if we have to wait three years for a water supply. Surely we can wait six or seven months until we get the opinion of the country. The scheme will take quite three months to discuss, and the few months more that it will take to get the voice of the country will make no great difference. However, I do not bind myself to vote either for or against it, but when the matter comes before us I shall give it that grave consideration which it deserves. I now come to paragraph 5, which, as the Hon. Mr. Crowder said, is also a most important matter. It is no use to construct railways, it seems to me, or provide water supplies, if we are not going to make our towns habitable. If, as has been pointed out, Perth

is a hot-bed of disease, what is the use of spending enormous sums of money on the development of our goldfields, if the City and the Port are to remain practically uninhabitable? Both Perth and Fremantle are a disgrace to us, and if things go on as they have been going, these towns will not be fit to live in. The sooner, therefore, the question of sewerage is taken in hand the better. Last session a survey for a railway to the Pilbarra goldfield was promised by the Government, and that promise led the people to believe that the Government were in earnest, and intended shortly to provide them with a railway. Now, I see in this Speech that the only mention made of the subject is that the survey has been completed. Whether the Government are going to construct a railway there or not is not stated, but if not I think the reason for this course should have been set out in this Speech. We all know that at one time this was a district which virtually kept the colony going, and if it had not been for Pilbarra and Kimberley, I doubt very much whether Coolgardie would have been found. These two goldfields were the means of bringing miners and prospectors from the other side, and they gradually travelled until they got to Coolgardie. The man who found Coolgardie was a man who came from Kimberley. I do not think that we should neglect the interests of that part of the colony, but should see that it has equal rights and benefits with other parts of the colony. The Government propose to spend £2,500,000 on a water supply for Coolgardie, but surely some part of it might be spent on supplying Pilbarra with a railway. If that part of the colony does not get anything out of this loan it will never get it. When we come to Bunbury we find that money is available for harbor works. I suppose £1,000,000 is to be spent there upon harbor works, and this within 100 miles of Fremantle, where enormous sums are now being spent. Why not let us see whether the Fremantle works will be a success before we incur further expenditure? It will be said that there is plenty of timber at Bunbury, and that that is the reason for the harbor works.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: What about the coal?



THE HON. F. M. STONE: We hope it will not be necessary for the coal to come on other than by railway to Fremantle and the goldfields.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: Will there not be an export trade?

THE HON. F. M. STONE: If we have any faith in this colony, the import trade will be twice the export trade. The coal required for our fields should prevent any export of it. At any rate, it will be time to talk about building harbor works when the time comes to export coal. I hope when the reasons are given why the Pilbarra railway is not to be constructed they will be good ones. If it is said there is no money, I do not think that will apply, because it does not apply to Bunbury. It is said that these fields can do with a road, but at present we can make railways cheaper than roads. Would the people of Coolgardie have been satisfied with a road? They would have clamored for a railway, and they would have got it. I think the colony is to be congratulated on its financial position, but, at the same time, we should not squander our money. Where possible, we should spend our surplus on works which will bring us something back, so that when the dark days come the whole colony will be equal to the burden.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I am sure the kindly remarks of hon. gentlemen in reference to the late Mr. W. E. Marmion will act as a solace to his family, to whom his loss must be irreparable. His loss, I think, will be acknowledged by the colony as a whole, and by the Parliament of which he was such a bright and shining light. The Hon. Mr. Stone made kindly reference to the hon. gentlemen, and I only wish to add one small quotation to what he has said. The late Mr. Marmion was a gentleman who never made an enemy, and never lost a friend. On behalf of the constituency I represent I thank hon. gentlemen for their kindly remarks in respect to our late member. It was somewhat refreshing to me after this depressing debate to find the Hon. Mr. Stone in one of his antagonistic moods. He was not prepared to swallow the whole Speech at once; he was prepared only to digest its contents slowly. The Hon. Mr. Hackett caused me some surprise by the speedy manner in which he

mastered the whole Speech, and swallowed it, and was prepared to support it from beginning to end. The hon. gentleman told us that he had received a copy of the Speech late the night before. I presume he must have had some sleep, and that he had his daily labor to perform, and yet we find him in the afternoon swallowing the whole thing without seeking any further information whatever. I mentioned a few minutes ago that this debate seemed to me to be of a depressing nature, and I think that is caused by the Chamber itself having a most depressing effect. If the hon. the Minister for Mines will consider the matter and see whether he cannot move the Government to provide the Council with a more fitting Chamber he will do some service.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): I shall only be too pleased.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I listened to the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Crowder for some time to see if he was prepared to support one item, but I found he was not. I wonder when we shall hear him support anything. I have never heard him support anything since I have been in the House. He condemned the Fremantle harbor works, and I think he called it a sink-pit. I do not mind him calling names, but there is one satisfaction about it, and that is that he will not join in making another sink-pit in connection with the harbor works at Bunbury. With regard to the water scheme I spoke very definitely in another place. I said I was against a scheme of such a stupendous nature, involving as it will further large burdens upon the people. I shall not support it unless I am satisfied that it is going to be a success, and that it is going to be completed for the money stated, and unless it is proved conclusively that it will supply the goldfields now and for all time. I think the Government will be wise before proceeding further to obtain the services of a couple of experts to come to this colony (not to report from London), and tell us whether the scheme is likely to be successful. The Minister has told us that two or three syndicates intend to apply for concessions. If the Government are going to carry out this scheme, I cannot see why they should allow private enterprise to come in.