

the Opposition would be; and with Shakespeare I say we would

... rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of.

I shall vote against the no-confidence motion, and support the present Government.

On motion by Mr. BURGESS, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at six minutes to 10 o'clock, until the next day.

### Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 19th July, 1905.

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THE ACTING PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4-30 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### REGULATIONS UNDER WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT, TO DISALLOW.

On motion by Hon. M. L. MOSS, ordered that the resolution passed at the last sitting, relating to the disallowance of regulations made under the Workers' Compensation Act, be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly and their concurrence desired therein.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY PASSENGER RATES, ANOMALIES.

HON. M. L. MOSS asked the Colonial Secretary: In the new Rate Book, have the anomalies in the passenger rates from Fremantle been removed, in accordance with the Minister's promise made in reply to my question on the point asked last session?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The new Rate Book only deals with goods and merchandise. The passenger book is now under consideration and revision.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1, Report on the Ravensthorpe Smelter, by G. O. Klug. 2, Report on the Progress of the Phillips River Goldfield and State Smelting Works, by the State Mining Engineer. 3, The Mining Act, 1904—Regulations. 4, By-laws of the Municipalities of Fremantle and North Perth. 5, Copies of Orders in Council authorising certain transfers under "The Audit Act, 1904" (Section 35). 6, Report of the Education Department for the year 1904. 7, Goldfields Water Supply Administration By-laws. 8, Statement of Receipts and Expenditure of the Fire Brigades Board for year ended 31st December, 1904. 9, Return of the number of Royal Commissions appointed by the State Government since 30th June, 1904, etc.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY explained that the return asked for by Mr. Sholl was not exactly complete information, but it was as complete as he could get it that afternoon. Some additional information was required, which he would supply if ample time were given.

#### MIDLAND RAILWAY AND LANDS PURCHASE, REPORTS.

HON. J. W. HACKETT moved that the adjourned debate on the motion by the Hon. W. Kingsmill, for production of the full report of the board of inquiry into the extent and value of the Midland Railway and lands, be farther adjourned for one week.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Certain information had been promised in the Governor's Speech in relation to the proposed purchase of the Midland Railway and lands, and that information should have been laid before members of this House at the earliest possible date. The option in regard to purchase would expire at the end of the month, and therefore the matter must be decided within that time under the option. Many days had elapsed since that promise was made in the Governor's Speech, and only

some 12 days remained before the end of the month for the consideration of this large and important question; yet no information, no details were yet placed before members. Why were not these details placed before us, together with the reports of those gentlemen who had examined and reported on the character of the land to be purchased? Members wanted the whole of the details, in order that they might properly approach the consideration of this question, which was one that should be carefully considered and fully looked into. He did not desire to say a word for or against the proposed purchase; but although members had not the information which they required for forming an opinion on the question, it was proposed by an hon. member to postpone the consideration of this motion relating to papers for another week. If that were done, only five days would remain till the end of the month for considering this important question. It was the duty of the Government to place the whole of the information before members long before this date.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew): The position was this. We had only an option till the end of the month; and there seemed to be a very great likelihood that we should not be able to consider the proposal before the expiration of that time. In any case, he could assure members that all the information possessed by the Government relating to this subject would be available to members in ample time, before they were asked to consider the question. He would guarantee that this information should be placed before members; and if any member wished to see the papers in the meantime, he could do so by calling at the Premier's office. If these papers were laid on the table of the House, the information would appear in the Press, and certain consequences might ensue. He again assured members that every opportunity would be afforded to study the reports, before the House was called on to deal with the question of the proposed purchase.

**HON. W. T. LOTON:** It was extraordinary that the Government should have practically pledged themselves to the purchase of the Midland railway and lands for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  millions, subject to the

approval of Parliament, and yet they kept the information back from Parliament. The Government were actually pledged to the purchase, subject to the approval of Parliament, and yet they were not giving an opportunity for members to consider the details before being asked to pass a resolution on the subject.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The fullest opportunity would be given to members, that was if the question were to come before Parliament prior to the end of the month; and as to the length of time that would be reasonable for considering the question, he thought two days should be ample.

**HON. J. D. CONNOLLY:** It was very unfair to ask Parliament to give its assent to a proposal of this important nature, involving an expenditure of one and a-half millions, without full information on the subject. If the information was to be shown to every member who chose to call at the Premier's office, why should not the information be laid on the table of the House? He asked the Minister to state definitely what was considered to be ample time for perusing the papers before members were asked to deal with the question.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** If any member chose to call to-morrow at the Premier's office, he could have the use of the reports without the slightest obstacle being placed in his way; and any member availing himself of this opportunity would have from that time till the question actually came before Parliament. He would say again that before the question came before Parliament the papers would be laid on the table. Members were aware that there was some doubt whether the matter could come before Parliament this month, owing to the political situation; and if it could not be dealt with prior to the end of the month, the option would expire.

**HON. S. J. HAYNES** did not see why members should be under the necessity of attending at the Premier's office to see papers which ought to be placed before members in regular course. The Minister had mentioned two days as a reasonable time. It would be much more convenient to members if the papers were laid on the table, and they should be on the table at least a fortnight before the question was dealt with in the House.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It was usually in the discretion of the Government as to what papers should be laid on the table; and in present circumstances one could understand that there was considerable perplexity in regard to this subject. Speaking for himself, he did not feel pledged in any way on the subject. [HON. W. T. LORON: But the Premier was pledged.] The Premier was pledged to recommend it. A number of circumstances surrounding the Government should be taken into consideration, and there were other matters which would be in the minds of members. The Government, when the time came to propose this purchase, should give us all the information in their power, and ample time to discuss the question. One could understand that if all the papers were now laid on the table, any action to be taken by the Government might be prejudiced; but, in the circumstances, it was usual for the representative of the Government to suggest that members who wished to obtain information might do so privately and confidentially, thus making it know to members but not to outsiders. Apparently no harm could be done by leaving the question to the Government, provided the fullest possible time were given to discuss the matter. Personally he believed that the obstacle in the way of the proposition ever reaching this House was becoming more formidable every hour.

Question passed, the order postponed.

#### SUPPLY BILL, £648,628.

##### ALL STAGES.

Bill received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (HON. J. M. DREW) moved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as may be necessary to pass the Bill through all its stages at one sitting.

This was the procedure adopted in the past. Whatever Government was now or might soon be in power, supply would be needed. All knew there was a political "situation." There might be fresh developments, and an adjournment of both Houses. In these circumstances there could hardly be any real opposition to the Bill.

HON. M. L. MOSS (West) seconded.

Question passed, the Standing Orders suspended.

##### SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. R. F. SHOLL (North): It is not my intention to oppose this Bill; but I should like to draw the attention of the Government and the House to the fact that our financial year ends on the 30th June of each calendar year. Parliament is called together subsequent to that date, and a Supply Bill is brought in to provide for expenditure during a certain portion of the financial year beginning the 1st July. The question in my mind is—and this is not the first time I have raised it, for I raised it years ago—that though the Government are only following a precedent, I think the precedent is altogether illegal. It commits the country to expenditure before that expenditure has received the assent of Parliament. I have always held that Parliament should be called together before the end of the financial year, so as to obtain supply for the ensuing year. In my opinion, if any Government can carry on for a few days without being granted supply before the financial year commences, on the same principle they can carry on for six months without supply.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The Estimates are brought in some months after the beginning of the year.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: I know they are; but this Bill is for a lump sum. It may be argued that the Government will not require this money till the end of the month; but they are committed to expend it. I know this has been done in the past, I think ever since the granting of Responsible Government; but I consider the system absolutely illegal, and for that reason I protest against it. I notice that elsewhere Parliament is, in most instances, called together before the 30th June, on which date I presume the financial year ends, as with us. The same practice ought to obtain here. To commit the country to ten days' or six months' expenditure is illegal. If the Government have a right to spend money without authority for ten days, they have a right to do so for two months or six months, as the case may be.

Question passed.

Bill read a second time.

# IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Schedule A :

HON. W. KINGSMILL: This schedule appeared to be an innovation, and some explanation was needed of the plan on which it was constructed. It had 51 divisions. By whom were they made? Without explanation it was hard to gather what were the advantages of these divisions, and what induced the Government to make them.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The only object was to supply fuller information than had previously been given. He was not now in a position to give details of the expenditure, nor did these appear necessary.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: What did the divisions mean?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The items, such as "His Excellency the Governor," were self-explanatory.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: The question he asked the Minister was, what induced the Government to make this innovation, and what did the innovation mean? Apparently the Minister had no information to give.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY: Did the schedule provide for subsidies to municipalities and roads boards, and under what heading? This matter was apparently overlooked in the Financial Statement last session; and considerable inconvenience resulted to country roads boards, members of which, finding themselves unable to obtain fulfilment of previous Government's promises, had privately guaranteed necessary expenditure. This year such a difficulty should not recur.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A definite promise could not be given; but the Government would endeavour to carry out all obligations. On the Estimates members could consider the position; and he expected the Estimates to be brought in some time next month.

HON. M. L. MOSS: For how long would this supply suffice?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: For two months.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: Was this schedule to be a new form of the Estimates? Were they to assume the

same form? Division No. 46 showed "Contingencies, £59,000." If the Government appended Estimates to their temporary Supply Bills, they should be Estimates, and not divisions which gave practically no information as to how the money was spent. If information were intended to be given, it should be given more fully. Knowing that a Public Service Commissioner had been appointed and that the departments of the service had to be reclassified, he had thought it possible that Schedule (a), in which much information appeared, might be the result of the Commissioner's labour.

HON. W. T. LOTON: When the House met at this period of the year votes and supplies must be exhausted, and a vote must be obtained in order to pay salaries of officers in the public service for the month of July. The vote should not exceed practically what would cover the amount of the official salaries for the month. We ought to have details of what the vote was for. Referring to the item mentioned by Mr. Kingsmill, the salaries for the Public Works Department were set down as £5,475, and contingencies £59,108. That was three-fourths of a million over the whole year. We were voting for the Public Works Department at the rate of £720,000 for the year, and members were asked to vote the first instalment without one jot of information as to what the vote was for. In the light of past events the information should be given, for there was a deficit of £45,000. It would be interesting to know the exact position of the finances, and the liabilities up to the end of June. It would be an easy matter to pay liabilities for June out of the contingency vote of £59,000; that would not add to the deficit.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: All liabilities were paid.

HON. W. T. LOTON: It was to be hoped that was so. Only an amount to pay salaries should be asked for, and the sooner the Premier took steps to place the finances on a proper basis the better, so that we should know how we stood. We were asked to vote £500,000, which was one-sixth of the revenue for the year.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was a matter purely for the House to decide whether members would accept or reject the Bill. The Government had

no ulterior motive in introducing the measure, and he assured members that he would not endeavour to press members against their convictions to pass a Bill of this nature. Mr. Kingsmill had complained about the absence of information. The hon. member last year, immediately after the opening of Parliament, introduced a Supply Bill for £1,000,000, and furnished the House with absolutely no information. He had taken the precaution to look up *Hansard*, and found the Bill was passed without any opposition on the part of the House. Not a member protested or made a speech; yet now because the Government had given information, many members complained and said they should have full details of the expenditure. Surely members could not be serious, but desired to express their opinions on the situation.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY: The intention he had in asking for information was that he wished to know whether subsidies to municipalities and roads boards were provided for. If his memory was correct, this matter was overlooked in some manner on the last Estimates, and the money had to be taken from some other source.

HON. G. RANDELL: The Bill before the Committee gave a considerable amount of information. The difficulty he saw was whether there was any item of expenditure which was not included and which it would be illegal to expend money on; but according to the first clause of the Bill he thought the difficulty would be overcome. The information given in the measure was of service to members, and he could not see how the contingency vote was to be wiped out. If it was, it would land the country in a very great difficulty. If the House were to reject the Bill the Government would have to go on trusting to Parliament in the future providing for all the expenditure. He sympathised with the Colonial Secretary in not being able to answer all the questions put to him, for it very often happened that the representative of the Government in the Council was not furnished with all the information he ought to get, and questions unexpectedly arising puzzled the Minister.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Under the Public Works division an amount of £59,000 was provided for

contingencies, and under Miscellaneous £21,000 was provided. The subsidies to municipalities might be paid out of these amounts.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: When the Estimates were before Parliament they were divided in a different manner from what was found in the Bill. The divisions were according to the Ministerial departments, and he had merely asked whether the system had been changed. There appeared to be a different system of classifying the Estimates. Information should be given as fully as possible, and any departure from the usual form should be notified to members.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: It appeared that we were voting this money in the dark. In regard to public Works and Buildings they could only spend £5,475 in salaries; £59,108 was for Contingencies, which might mean anything. They could spend £59,108 under no particular heading at all. The same applied to every head on the schedule. This Miscellaneous vote was a patronage vote. There were no details and the Government could do what they liked. In the old days he used to call for a return of the Miscellaneous vote, and that return used to be interesting reading. [HON. J. W. HACKETT: Never on a Supply Bill.] No; not on a Supply Bill. The Contingency vote appeared to him to recognise the principle of giving the Government a very large sum of money to expend as they liked under no particular heading.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedule B:

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Were the amounts for new works?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY understood they were simply for a continuation of works already in progress.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: As to harbour and river improvements, could the Colonial Secretary give any information? Were the Government improving the rivers out of loan or out of revenue? Would there be an expenditure on the river frontage on the Swan? [THE COLONIAL SECRETARY was unable to give that information.] Sums should not be expended out of loan money on any unproductive work such as that on the Swan.

Schedule put and passed.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### FOURTH DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous Wednesday.

HON. M. L. MOSS (West): I desire in common with other members to congratulate you, Sir, on your appointment as Acting President. I am sure you feel gratified at the confidence which the House has reposed in you; and the House will have no occasion to regret having placed you in the position during the absence of Sir George Shenton. I am sure we also hope that Sir George will return here at an early date to take up his duties, which he has so well performed in the past. Every year it seems to me that the discussion on the Address-in-Reply is almost, so far as the acceptance or rejection of the Address is concerned, useless. Were it not for the fact that it enables members to express their opinions on the matters contained in the Speech and other questions which are of public importance, this could be disposed of as a mere matter of form, because, so far as this Chamber is concerned, it is quite useless to pass amendments to this Address, for they have no effect whatever, and of course speaking entirely for myself, there is a great deal in the Speech which it is quite impossible for me, even if I as a matter of form voted for the acceptance of the motion now before the House, to give adherence to, holding the views I do on many of those political questions, and I cannot on the present occasion hope even to deal with the whole of the matters contained in the Address, because to do so would occupy the House an unnecessarily long time. I shall of course have an opportunity when these measures come forward, if they get as far as this House, of expressing my opinions regarding them, and I will deal presently with some of the most important matters contained in the Speech, and endeavour to indicate exactly the attitude I propose taking up with regard to them. It is not my intention to worry the House this afternoon with a great number of figures, but there are three or four

matters which I want to bring prominently before the notice of members in order to enable me to deal briefly with the taxation proposals of the Government. At the end of the financial year 1904, there was a credit balance of £83,336, and at the end of 1905 a deficit of £46,522, or an excessive expenditure over revenue during that year of £129,855. The revenue for the whole year was £3,615,339, and the expenditure was £3,745,224; so it seems to me that a Government which came into power with the distinct promise that it was going to economise and which meets Parliament with a huge deficiency, practically £130,000 after having made such a promise, must have been guilty of gross extravagance. I believe it is high time that this country and those persons responsible for the government of the country should make any Ministry understand that above all things it must bring its expenditure within the revenue that the country has received. It is a very vast revenue indeed when we think that the population of the country is only a mere handful, a quarter of a million people. That a magnificent revenue exceeding  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions sterling is not sufficient for the administration of this country does not speak well for the administration of the Government that brings about this state of affairs which we are confronted with to-day. I am afraid that they are not going to profit by past experience, because taking the Supply Bill which has come down to-day and which the Minister has told us is a supply to carry on the government of this country for a period of two months, and taking the amount authorised by this Bill as the average expenditure for two months, and multiply the sum by six, the expenditure of the present financial year will be £3,891,768, or an excess expenditure over last year's operations which yielded this deficiency of £146,544. [HON. W. T. LORON: The hon. member has included loan expenditure.] I withdraw those observations, and will refer to division 51 in that schedule as an instance of the extravagance that is going on in the country. The Government have created an additional department, and those who have had anything to do with the affairs of this State know perfectly well that

the creation of an additional department always occasions considerable additional expense. These departments first are started perhaps with one or two officers, but they suddenly grow and grow until they become a very great tax upon the State. This Department of Labour, I take it, is a striking instance of what I am now speaking of. For two months it has cost £889, and on that basis it is going to cost the country during the ensuing year £5,334. I shall have something to say with regard to the expenditure on that department presently, but I believe that is an extravagance the country could very well do without. I have limited myself to these few figures simply with this object in view. One of the cardinal principles contained in this Speech is that notwithstanding the magnificent revenue which the country has, we are to be still farther burdened with taxation. Apparently  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions is insufficient for the purposes of a quarter of a million of people, even insufficient with the Ministry who came in pledged to economy, and complained that their predecessors had not conducted the affairs of this State in the way in which they should have been conducted. They took up the reins of power with a surplus, and they end up with a deficiency, and it strikes me from the way they are going on that instead of the deficiency being reduced it is going to be increased by the end of the next financial year. According to the policy that is put before us there is to be an income tax and there is to be a land tax. I say at once with regard to the income tax that I have no objection to it at all. It is a very fair system of taxation if it be necessary for the purposes of keeping the affairs of the country in a solvent condition; but my contention is that it is entirely unnecessary that farther taxation should be imposed upon the people of this country, and I contend that the revenue is ample for all purposes if it is expended economically and carefully; but if there is to be extravagance in the departments, if other departments are to be created involving the country in thousands a year, and if money is to be expended in the way I am going to prove it has been expended, and we continue all these Royal Commissions—another glaring instance of extravagance—of course it will be necessary to impose

land taxes, income taxes, and all other things to keep pace with the extravagance. I am quite prepared to give my vote in favour of an income tax when the time arrives; but it does seem to me inexpedient that all these sources of revenue for the future, when they may be necessary, shall be drawn upon at the present time when it is quite unnecessary, and the present revenue ought to be sufficient for all purposes. But I take up an entirely different attitude with regard to the proposal to impose a land tax. We hear on all hands that some contribution should be made by people whose land is increased in value through the construction of public works. We are told that the unearned increment should pay something towards the government of the country; but unfortunately it is not those persons who came to this country fifty or sixty years ago, and who got their land at a cheap rate, that hold these areas to-day. If we had proper information on the point I think it would be conclusively proved that the bulk of the valuable property in this State has been recently purchased by persons who have bought pretty well within the market value; and to impose taxation on that class of person savours to my mind almost of confiscation. It is all very well for people in another place, some of whom perhaps are not possessed of very much land, though I do not regard that as a crime; it is perhaps more an inconvenience to them that they have not wealth in that direction, and it is always an easy thing to tax the other man. This Chamber would be in an awkward position in rejecting a taxation proposal if the question of a land or an income tax had been prominently before the public at the time of a general election and a large number of members was returned to another place pledged to the tax; but there is certainly no warrant at the present time to put particularly an income tax on the people of the State. The matter was not before the country at the time of the general election; and on that ground this Chamber would be justified, if on no other ground, in throwing the measure out. The question should go before the country and should form one of the demands at a general election before the tax is attempted to be imposed. With due economy, careful administration, and

a due regard to the interests of the State, there is no necessity for a handful of people, such as we have in the country at the present time, to resort to taxation of this kind. We have found the revenue sufficient for all purposes. What we want now is a fearless man to come along and put his hand on these extravagances, no matter whom they affect, and make the necessary retrenchments and reductions until the country can carry on with the means it has at its disposal at present. There is another instance of extravagance, and one which is difficult to understand. When the present Government came into office, they were pledged that during any one financial year it was imprudent to pledge the credit of the country for works to be constructed out of loan to a greater extent than half a million in one year; but strange to say the borrowings of the Government during the first year have approximated two millions sterling; and not only this, according to those who have gone closely into the matter, something approaching £100,000 has been borrowed in excess of parliamentary authority. Unless members in both Houses are to be mere registering machines for the Government in power, if there is one thing more than another on which strong protest should be entered, it is any Government exceeding parliamentary authority and placing burdens on the people of the State in the way of farther loans. While £100,000 is not a very large amount in comparison with the value of the public estate in West Australia, if parliamentary authority is to be set at defiance, and if this sum can be borrowed without authority, once the principle is approved, good-bye to parliamentary government. The Ministry that can borrow £100,000 without authority can borrow millions without parliamentary authority; and all the Council and Assembly will become will be two registering machines to register the edicts of a Government guilty of an unlawful and illegal act like that. Knowing that there has been excess borrowing, such as I have indicated, I would be failing in my duty if on the first opportunity I did not raise my voice in emphatic protest against a step of such a character. A public works policy is a great allurements. It enables the member for a particular constituency that is able to get a certain portion

of that public expenditure to go back to his electors and say how much he has been able to get in the game that has gone on in the division of the spoils. Not only have the Government borrowed an amount approaching two millions in one year, but this Speech contains a proposal to borrow many millions of money more. In my opinion there is no sincerity in it. It is a matter of great regret that on the last loan the underwriters are carrying 80 per cent. of the amount of that stock. I know from the best of authority, not only the local Press, but authorities in London, that this is an absolute fact and that this country cannot approach the London market during the next year or two for money at all. It is idle to put into his Excellency's mouth words which indicate the borrowing of millions of money when it is impossible to do it. It would be an exceedingly good thing if this policy of borrowing and this forced prosperity which is occasioned to the country in consequence of it were stopped. There is bound to come a day of reckoning. So far as West Australia is concerned, there is one bright spot, and one only, in this matter, and that is that the sinking fund contains to-day nearly one million of money beyond the control of an impecunious Treasurer. But for that, it would be a serious outlook with the continued demands made in both Houses of Parliament to authorise farther borrowings. So far as I can see, even if Parliament felt disposed to give the authority the Ministry have asked for, there is little opportunity of going on the market to raise these millions of money at the present juncture or in any short space of time. Three railways are projected—the Narrogin, Jandakot, and Norseman. I do not propose to say much in regard to any of these, more than that I think it my duty in regard to the Jandakot Railway to make a statement. It is a mere repetition of what I have said on previous occasions; and I do it more on personal grounds, so that my constituents may know that I am still true to the pledge I gave years ago and last session. I am still fully convinced that the proper place for the Jandakot Railway to junction with the South-Western Railway is at Armadale; and I am prepared, when the occasion arises, to do my level best to



carry out that policy. Fremantle is promised a floating dock. I do not profess to be anything like the authority Captain Laurie is on a question of this kind; but speaking for a considerable section of people at Fremantle, I say we do not require a floating dock. If the same parsimonious spirit had been exhibited in years past in regard to the construction of the harbour, the cost of making it an up-to-date work, for that seems to be the reason which actuates the Government in proposing a floating dock in lieu of a graving dock, what would Fremantle have been to-day? Would the harbour have been the success it is, or capable of doing the work it is now able to perform? I think not. When the finances of the country will enable it to be constructed, we require a graving dock. I am not, as the representative of the West Province, going to say that the graving dock should be constructed at once if the finances of the country will not allow it to be done; but when the money is forthcoming, at the first available opportunity I think a graving dock should be constructed. Why, the Government propose to send out of the country the greater portion of the whole of the cost of the floating dock to enable some foreign manufacturer to get the benefit; whereas if a graving dock be constructed, it will be a much more superior work and will be a permanent work, and the expenditure on the construction will take place in and about Fremantle, so that the people there will derive the benefit from it, which would not be the case if the money be sent out of the State for the purchase of a floating dock. I am rather surprised that the Government who have catered so magnificently for the working man should dream of sending so large a sum as £150,000 out of the State. I should have thought, in accordance with the political programme they have laid down, that the more expenditure they could make around the locality, particularly expenditure which in my opinion is amply and fully justified, they would have regarded it as of more importance; but no. On this question they are looking through a very parsimonious pair of spectacles for something cheap and nasty, something on which the wear and tear will be considerable.

There are gentlemen in the House more capable of speaking on this question. All I desire to do is to raise my voice in protest against so large an expenditure for a work, the whole of which expenditure will go out of the State, and a work which will not be nearly so useful to the shipping at Fremantle as a proper graving dock. In looking through this Speech I confess I was much disappointed at the one ray of sunlight in the Premier's speech at Subiaco a year ago being omitted. We were then told that the Government were going in for an extensive scheme of immigration. Was this a sincere policy on the part of the Government? There are proposals here for the expenditure of millions to carry out public works. They borrowed close on two millions last year; but what allocation is there for an immigration policy? Have the Trades Hall party given their instructions in regard to this matter?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: You should not impute motives.

MR. MOSS: Motives? I thought the instructions came from that source; and I ask a question, "Have the Trades Hall party given their instructions in this regard." We look at the statistical returns and find that the increase in population last year was a paltry 10,000 or 11,000. Is that sufficient to make the country the great country it is destined to be? I agree with Mr. Patrick that what the country requires is money and men; and unless we bring population to this country, depend on it every loan we put on the London market will meet with a greater rebuff on each occasion. They look at the population of the country to see whether it is capable of bearing the burden it proposes to take on its shoulders. Unless some means are devised to bring population—I do not mean pauper population, but the right class of men with capital—and unless such people can be induced to come here, it will be very difficult to raise money to carry out even reproductive works. In my opinion loan money is only defensible on the supposition that we will gain an increase in population and so decrease the burden on the people. It should be one of the foremost planks in the platform of every Government, whether it meets with the approval of

the Trades Hall party or not, to do this duty to the country and bring as many people to it as possible, to enable them and those in the State to work for the development of the country and its resources. Now, look for a moment at the almost superhuman efforts in Canada on this question. Two years ago I passed through Canada and had the opportunity of ascertaining there, and in London, the efforts that are made in this regard. No obstacle is placed in the way, every effort is made to get population. Canada, alongside the United States, if it were as exclusive as Australia is in regard to this important question, would be bound to run back; but every effort is to put it forward. Canada has greater advantages in regard to getting people than Australia. The journey from Europe takes a little over a week, and the passage money is perhaps about a quarter of what it is to come to Australia, while people from the old country are able to get back to their old homes by means of a very short trip. But I have this confidence in Australia with all its disadvantages; if proper efforts are put forth and we can induce people to come here, every man that comes to Australia, particularly that man with a little capital, has a much better future before him than is the case with the man going to Canada. We are blest with a climate which to a large extent counterbalances many drawbacks of this country. In Canada the bulk of the country for six or seven months in the year is snowed up, and people have the greatest difficulty to live; whereas in Australia, particularly in Western Australia, a man who is settled on the land with a little capital, after getting over his initial difficulties has a market at his very door, which enables him to obtain prices that the Canadian farmer cannot hope to get, because the bulk or indeed the whole of his produce has to go to the mother country, and there to compete with produce from the United States and from other markets. There is every reason to put forward a good progressive policy with regard to immigration for bringing people to this country; and it is a sad disappointment to me to find that in the Governor's Speech, involving as it does an expenditure of a considerable sum of money in public works, no portion of this large

expenditure is to be set apart for so important a purpose as the encouragement of immigration. With regard to the purchase of the Midland Railway and lands, in my opinion it would not be a fair thing for any member to express his opinion until full information is put before us. This question must be decided on business lines. The question is, will it pay the country to purchase the railway and lands at the price mentioned, or is it desirable we should negotiate with a view to getting a reduction of the price? We have to bear in mind that if we purchase this property, we shall thereby add a million and a-half to the indebtedness of the country, and undoubtedly every member will be bound to admit that this financial transaction is going to have some effect on the future borrowing operations of this State; so it comes back to this, whether as a business venture it will pay this country to purchase this property at the price of a million and a-half? I should be sorry to express an opinion without the fullest information, and when that information is put before us, I shall be prepared to give sufficient time to become fully conversant with it, and be prepared to express my opinion one way or the other. Referring now to another subject, the Government deserve to be congratulated on that part of the Speech which refers to the proposed construction of a railway from Port Hedland to Nullagine, in the way suggested in the Speech. If we can get private enterprise to take up this important project of building a railway and working it, the Government will have done something beneficial to the State. My friend Mr. Kingsmill says that the constituents of members may have something to say against it. I shall be glad if members of this House will have the courage, even though some of their supporters object, to vote on this question for promoting an important public work, because this is the only way in which that portion of the State is likely to obtain railway communication. We are told that part of the policy of the Government is that there shall be introduced during this session a Bill providing for a referendum of the people to be taken on the question whether this House is to be abolished, or whether the qualification of

the electors for this House is to be so reduced as to have this House constituted practically on the same lines as another place, or whether the qualification is to be reduced as a stepping-stone for its ultimate abolition. I have a great objection to this principle of referendum being resorted to on any occasion. Can any member of this House conscientiously say that when the question of a referendum as to whether this colony should enter into Federation was taken there were even five per cent. of the people who understood what they were voting for? I admit that the question of a referendum on the constitution of the Legislative Council is a simpler matter than that of a referendum as to entering into the federal bond. Although I voted for Federation and took an active part in connection with the reference of that Bill to the people, I confess now that I did not understand the question clearly, although I took the trouble to read the Bill. Indeed, I do not believe that five per cent. of the people in the State understood the question on which they were then voting. With regard to a referendum on this question, it is not because there is a passing wave of opinion with regard to whether this House should exist or not that the Constitution of the country should be tampered with and decided by a referendum vote. We know that when the issues of a general election are before the people of the country, there is a great amount of apathy among electors, and that a comparatively small number of persons in proportion to the whole of the electors can make a great noise if they choose to do it. I dare say that, to a certain section, the question of breaking down and destroying existing institutions has some charm; yet I believe the great bulk of the people are perfectly satisfied that this House has performed its functions and its duty to the satisfaction of the country. I will put this point to members: What would be the condition of the past legislation if this country had had a single-Chamber Legislature, and that Legislature had had its full fling without the check of a second Chamber? We know that for months we sit in this Chamber rectifying Bills sent here from another place, and that the state in which some of them come to us is a positive disgrace. I

am not here referring to matters of policy, but to the way in which Bills are presented to us. A Bill is introduced by the Government in another place, and the supporters there deem it an absolute duty to support that measure. Many of those members I dare say scarcely read the Bills; indeed I believe many of them are unable to follow the meaning of those measures. Members of this House know that we have been obliged to remodel many of the measures sent to us, and it will be a serious matter for the country to think of what would occur if many of those Bills that have come from another place had gone on the statute-book in the condition in which they came here. Indeed I am sure many of them would have been absolutely worthless. In a country like New Zealand, the great democratic colony of Australasia, there has never been a proposal to abolish the Legislative Council; and that is so even though it has been a nominee body, up till recently the members being nominated for life, though now the period is for seven years. Even there a democrat like Mr. Seddon has never ventured to say that the destinies of the country should be controlled by a one-Chamber Legislature. [HON. J. W. HACKETT: He is putting that forward at the present time.] Well, even allowing that is the proposal in New Zealand, I think we should give due consideration to the information on this point which was given to the House by Mr. Patrick, showing that in progressive countries there has never been an attempt to take away the second Chamber. The State Parliaments in Canada are little better than magnified municipal councils, yet each of those Parliaments has a second Chamber; and the Dominion Government of Canada has never been slow in exercising the right of veto in connection with such measures as an Alien Restriction Act. In Western Australia the Legislative Council exercises practically the same functions as the Dominion Parliament exercises over the provincial councils in Canada. So I say, to refer to another place for a moment, if members will only consider the disorganised condition into which the Legislative Assembly of this country gets in a session preceding a general election, they will be better able to realise the class of legislation that will get on the statute-book

if there is not the brake which this House affords against the fanciful or extravagant theories put forward on such occasions. While I have the honour to occupy a seat here, I shall resist to the utmost the approving of any Bill which will refer a question of this importance to the people of the country to decide. There is a proper way to deal with this question. I have pointed out that prior to the last election, if the temper of the country were in favour of a reduction of the franchise or the abolition of this Chamber, those people who are its constituents could within two years from that date have returned two-thirds of the members to this Chamber, pledged to its abolition or pledged to a reduction of the franchise. When that comes, I shall be prepared to bow to the alternative. The Constitution we have has been given to us by the Imperial Parliament, and modified by the free will of both Houses of Parliament until it is brought to its present position. Therefore, until those people send members to this Chamber who are prepared to give a vote for its abolition or for a reduction of the franchise, it is not within the province of another place to dictate to this House as to the course of action we should take in regard to the proposed referendum. It becomes necessary now to discuss this question: Has the Legislative Council been a barrier to any reform in this country? To go back as far as the introduction of responsible government, and to make a rapid survey of what has occurred during those 15 years, reforms have come about in this country to accomplish which has taken 50 or 60 years in any other parts of Australia. I am going to say again that without the action of the Legislative Council there would have been to-day no such measures on the statute-book as a Conciliation and Arbitration Act, no Workers' Compensation Act, no Truck Act, no Workers' Wages Lien Act, no electoral reform, no adult suffrage, no payment of members, no Triennial Parliaments Act, no Early Closing Act, no legalising of trades unions, no Factories Act, and other useful measures I might mention. Can it be honestly said by even the most biased opponent of this Chamber that the Legislative Council has been in any way a barrier to reform? Quite the reverse. Some people say that if the

Council had exercised its veto, it might have been better for the country. I will not say that; but I believe that while this Council retains its present position, it will be a safety-valve for the country that the country requires. And I believe I speak for the majority of the members here when I say that whatever measure is brought in for the benefit of the people as a whole, we are prepared to support. To listen to some of the criticisms levelled against this Chamber outside, one would conclude that the body consists of a number of hide-bound conservatives. That is not so. This Chamber has evinced great liberality, and supported every reform which was for the benefit of the people; and I think I have enough confidence in members sitting here to believe that in the future, as in the past, they will be actuated by the same desire to do what they can for the benefit of the State. What is the qualification for a Legislative Council elector? It is a £25 a year rental, ratepaying, a £10 Government lease, or the ownership of £100 worth of freehold land. As to the ratepaying qualification, almost any decent person in the community is paying 10s. a week as rent, or is the possessor of a house valued at 10s. a week. I do not believe in giving a vote for this Chamber to a mere tramp, a person who may have been liberated from prison to-day. I think there should be some property qualification. And if I may say so, I think it is regrettable that the Australian Senate is so much the counterpart of the House of Representatives. The Senate was supposed to be a body to guard State rights; but to my mind it is a body which seems to keep in the background those questions which it was created to study. The Senate should exercise as much control over those important questions as the Lower House exercises; and it must do so. But Senators are returned by the same body of electors which returns the Representatives; and when we compare the Australian Senate with the Senate of Canada or that of the United States, it is a matter of regret that in creating our Senate the proposal of Sir John Forrest was not carried out, that the Senators should be elected representatives of the Houses in the respective States. In the Federal Parliament one House is the counterpart of the

other; and if that should obtain in this State, we may readily dispose of an Upper Chamber. There would then be only one reason why we should retain that Chamber: the members of this House would not go out on an ordinary dissolution every third year. A certain percentage of the members would not be obliged to face the electors during the turmoil and trouble of a general election. The qualification for this House is in my opinion exceedingly low. If the qualification were similar to that which obtains for the Victorian Legislative Council, there might be some reason for the present outcry; but the only reason that exists to-day is that experiments which are a danger and a menace to the State cannot be carried through with that facility which would be possible if this House were not in being; and while I may be taken to task for this statement, I candidly believe that the difficulties of getting money in the London market would be increased tenfold, were it not for the protection and the safeguard this Chamber affords. Just a word with regard to the greatest abuse observed in this State for a considerable time. Ministers in power have the duty of carrying on the affairs of the State. Presently I shall compare their salaries with the remuneration of certain other people. Their salaries amount to £6,200 a year. I do not think any of us grudges any Minister the salary he receives from the State for the performance of his duties. The position of a Minister, if he properly carries out his duties, is not overpaid; and it is not in that regard that I mention the matter, but merely with the object of making a comparison. There seems to be a rule growing up in this State that the Ministry have not to govern the country; and an attempt is being made to govern it by means of Royal Commissions. Mr. Sholl is to be thanked by the House for the return he asked for, in which he sought to obtain for the country some particulars as to what has been done in respect of Royal Commissions; and although the return which the Minister has been good enough to lay on the table is not sufficient for my purpose, it is sufficient to indicate exactly what I am driving at, and the abuses which have crept in with regard to these Commissions. Mr. Sholl asked for the total cost to the

State of these Commissions, so that the House and the country might know how much public money is being expended in this manner. But the return presented gives us merely the amount of the fees drawn by the commissioners themselves; and by means of certain parliamentary papers placed on the table I have been enabled to make an approximate estimate of what the printing has cost; but we have no particulars before us of what was paid for witnesses' expenses in connection with these Commissions, nor any information as to what was paid to the various secretaries employed. But it may astonish members to know that for three or four of these Commissions £1,224 has been expended in printing; that in commissioners' fees £4,968 has been drawn, or, with the printing, £6,192, to say nothing of the huge sums which must have been paid for witnesses' expenses, for secretarial work, for shorthand writing, and other purposes. I wish to be perfectly fair; so I may say that I believe one or two of these Commissions—one at least—was the creation of the preceding Government. The bulk of them were created by the present Government. Now the Government ought to take the responsibility of governing the country; and if it is necessary to procure information to enable Ministers to do that, they should procure it through departmental channels, by means of departmental officers, and should not employ other people for the purpose. And certainly it is, in my opinion, a grave abuse of power for any Government to appoint to such Commissions members of another place, and members of another place whose votes are keeping the Government in power. I will not say, because it is a very debatable question, whether the acceptance of the office of a Royal Commissioner is the acceptance of an office of profit under the Crown. Opinions have been expressed for and against. Nor do I intend—because the information is on the table—to mention the names of members who have obtained such offices. To do so would serve no good purpose. But some members of another place—chiefly members who keep the Government in office and who are in receipt of parliamentary honoraria—have received sums such as £124 for 39 sittings on one Commission;

17 sittings, £41; 43 sittings, £93; 44 sittings, £95; 34 sittings, £111; 32 sittings, £67; 34 sittings, £71; and so I might go on. Each of these amounts is paid to a different member.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What Commissions were these?

HON. M. L. MOSS: The Royal Commissions on ocean freights and on immigration. I am referring particularly to these two. Such fees are very acceptable additions to a member's parliamentary honorarium; and it would be interesting if the Government took the opinion of the acting Attorney General on the question of their legality. But if the practice be legal I think it opens the door to a very great abuse; and if an opportunity is afforded of amending the law relating to Royal Commissions, I think it would be very sensible to include in the Bill a clause to the effect that any member of Parliament acting on a Royal Commission shall perform the duties without emolument. I acted for six months on a Royal Commission. I received no emolument, nor did I seek to obtain it; and I believe it is a very grave abuse of the power of a Government to give its supporters—and others in Parliament, in the hope that they may become supporters—positions on Royal Commissions where they are paid large sums of money at the rate of two or three guineas for each sitting, together with travelling expenses. I believe the practice is contrary to the best interests of this country; and it is productive of an extravagance in the management of the country, an extravagance which in my opinion can be done without. The Government have or ought to have a sufficient number of competent gentlemen in the civil service to procure for a Minister or the general body of Ministers sufficient information on every question. Ministers should assume the responsibility of dealing with such questions. They are put in office and paid for that purpose; and Royal Commissions are a gross scandal, an abuse, and an expense that the country cannot afford. In one year during which we have a deficiency we have spent, I think I shall be well within the mark when I say, £10,000 on Royal Commissions. One of the commissions professed to deal with the question of ocean freights; and I doubt very

much if the Minister, being placed in possession of all information on the subject, would have come to the conclusion arrived at by the Commission upon many of the questions with which it dealt. A very estimable firm in this country, Wm. Sandover & Co., was practically accused by that Commission either with not having obtained for the Government as good terms as were secured by other shippers of goods to this State, or—without beating about the bush—was perhaps accused of getting those terms and putting the money in its own pocket. [DR. HACKETT: No; of negligence.] It inferred negligence; but reading between the lines, it imputed the other thing. That finding was mainly arrived at, firstly because of a statement made by a most estimable citizen, J. W. Bateman, to which I will presently refer, that with reference to these shipments what is known as primage was all returned to the ship. I have taken the trouble to read a good deal of the evidence taken by that Commission, and the biased way in which questions were put to witness after witness, many of whom were ignorant of the question which was being discussed, was manifest. One member of that Commission, at any rate, started out with open-handed hostility against a firm to prove that they had done something dishonest. Questions were put in a leading way, such as this: "A leading shipper has stated so and so; what do you say?" Mr. Sandover was in the country, and one would have thought that in common fairness he would have been asked to express his opinion. But Mr. Sandover was forced into the unpleasant position of going before the Commission and tendering his evidence as a volunteer. It did not rest on Mr. William Sandover's statement, what I am coming to presently; but an estimable gentleman, Mr. Leeds, of Dalgety & Co., told the Commission that they were under an erroneous impression; that primage was not returned; and he assured the Commission that they were on the wrong track. Mr. Leeds stated that it was absurd to think that the five per cent. primage was returned. There was a general confusion between primage and what is known as deferred rebate; yet the Commission reported in a way which accused Mr. Sandover of negligence

and imputed to him almost dishonesty. The proper channel through which to get information—the Agent-General—was not utilised. Conscientiously but very erroneously, Mr. John Bateman gave his evidence, and on his evidence the report of the Commission was evidently based. Mr. Sandover was so absolutely staggered by the statement of Mr. Bateman that he put himself in communication with Messrs R. T. Turnbull & Co., of London, Mr. Bateman's buyer, who carries out the shipping work for Mr. Bateman. Mr. Sandover wrote to Mr. Collingwood as follows:—"I now return the papers you left with me, with thanks for the perusal. I have written to Mr. Bateman telling him that his evidence is wrong, and telling him to do whatever he considers best in the matter." I hold in my possession for the inspection of any member eight or nine sworn affidavits, one of which I am going to ask the leave of the House to read. It is very short, and expresses exactly the practice that obtains in London as to shipping matters; but before doing so let me say, as a result of a visit to the Under Treasurer, that I have satisfied myself by looking at scores of vouchers there that in every instance five per cent. primage on sailing vessels has never been charged to the Government; then in respect of steamers there is five per cent. primage and 10 per cent. deferred rebate; and in every case the Government got its deferred rebate of 10 per cent. That is what every shipper is entitled to, and can get on the best of terms. This is one of the eight or nine short affidavits. It is taken from Arthur Herbert Lanyon, of the firm of J. C. Lanyon & Sons, and it says:—

I am a member of the firm of J. C. Lanyon & Sons, of Coronation House, Lloyd's Avenue, and I have for over 20 years past been engaged in the business of a merchant shipping from the United Kingdom to the Australian colonies, including Western Australia.

I say that the customary course of business as regards primage and rebate on steamer freights to Western Australia is that the freight accounts are made up at the rate of freight quoted, plus primage at 10 per cent.; but of this primage half (five per cent.) is returned to the shipper on settlement of freight account and no more. As regards primage, that return or allowance of half of the primage is the only allowance made to the

shipper at the time of shipment; but shippers receive a farther return, which is called deferred rebate, and is at the rate of 10 per cent. on the rate of freight charged. Such deferred rebate is subject to the conditions of the attached declaration form, and it is only paid at the end of the half-year succeeding the expiration of six months from shipment; so that the brokers always have at least six months' rebatement in hand as a guarantee of the continuance of the shipment through themselves or associates. That is, rebate on shipment made between January and June, 1905, would only be due for payment on January 1st, 1906, and on shipments made between July and December, 1905, would only be due on the 1st July, 1906. And in no instance have I received rebates before due dates. The custom as regards sailing freights is similar to that hereinbefore stated by me as regards steamers, except that the primage is only five per cent., and that primage is returned to the shipper on settlement of the freight, the shipper getting, in addition, the deferred rebate of 10 per cent. on rate of freight charged as hereinbefore mentioned, but only upon the conditions and at the time as hereinbefore stated. I say that neither I nor my said firm have received any additional primage or received any additional deferred rebate, except at the rates and in the manner stated in paragraph 2.

The declaration which accompanies this as an exhibit, which I do not propose to read, and which is open to the inspection of any member, is to the effect that brokers in London have combined for the purposes of business, and are only pursuing the same course as men combine for their own protection; and the declaration sets out that, provided that people shipped with them or somebody in the combine, the rebate was made. Then it sets out the companies which are not in the combine, including the P. & O. Company, the Orient Company, and the West Australian Steam Navigation Company. The other names on the declarations are Henry Anders, of Elder, Smith and Company; John Wilson Bowder, of Fenchurch Avenue; William Marden, of East India Avenue; Oliver Jones Trinder, of Sussex Place, Leadenhall Street; Chas. Bethell, of 22 Billiter Street, London; Allan Garrett Anderson, of Fenchurch Avenue; and Frederick William Collingwood, of Lime Street Square, London. These affidavits are open to the inspection of members. It is plain the position is this, that in these steamers 10 per cent. primage is charged and five per cent. only is returned to the shipper. Five per cent. is charged

in sailers and none is returned; and at the end of a given period (six months) 10 per cent. deferred rebate is returned. In spite of this overwhelming mass of evidence, for the Commission to make the suggestion that there was negligence or any grounds for doing what I say the report does, imputes almost dishonesty to a gentleman whose firm and personal position whilst he resided in this State was almost above reproach, shows the absolute futility of referring these matters to a Commission. The Minister could have got this information through the Agent General, and could have found out that all actions were fair and above-board.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What about the charge of enormous profit on the part of the W.A. Shipping Association?

HON. M. L. MOSS: True. How is that going to be remedied, unless the Government run a line of steamers themselves? I tell the hon. member, although I do not want to be personal, that these steamship owners only combine as it would be possible for newspaper proprietors to combine, or legal firms to combine, or artisans to combine. They can combine together for the purpose of protecting themselves and keeping prices up. Where is the wrong? Trades unions exist to enable artisans to do that; and why should there be all this row because some people wished to form themselves into a limited liability company in order to make a profit out of it? It is open to others to go into the business.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: You know that is an impossibility.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Just as much as it is impossible for me to start a newspaper in opposition to the *West Australian*. With the goodwill which the *West Australian* newspaper possesses, it is impossible for anyone to go and bump up against it.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I will send that to my banker.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Is not the hon. gentleman travelling somewhat widely from the Speech?

HON. M. L. MOSS: I thought it was competent for a member to deal with any question on the Address-in-Reply.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: That is quite right; but the hon. member is travelling rather far.

HON. M. L. MOSS: At all events, I make my remarks relevant by saying that it is a matter which should have been referred to in the Speech. I leave it; I have achieved my purpose. I stood up to enter my protest against the defamation of a firm that I believe to be above reproach. During the past few weeks we have seen Mr. Roe again sitting on the Supreme Court Bench, carrying out the duties of a Supreme Court Judge. I have placed on record my commendation of the services of Mr. Roe on previous occasions, and I desire to do no more now than to repeat it with emphasis. But Mr. Roe is a magistrate holding office at the will of the Government, and I protest against placing on the Supreme Court Bench any gentleman who does not hold a regular and proper commission.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It was not done by this Government.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It was done by the last Government, and this Government too within the past few weeks. I protest against the functions of a Supreme Court Judge being given to anyone who does not hold a commission placing him above the power of the Government. This is not the first Government which has done this.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It is against the Constitution.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It is against the Constitution and against all constitutions framed in accordance with British notions. The functions of a Supreme Court Judge are such that he should be liable only to be removed from his position on the ground of misbehaviour. The Conciliation and Arbitration Act takes up the time of one Judge in this State, and there is no intermediate court between the Local Court and the Supreme Court, as there is in New South Wales, where there is a District Court presided over by a Supreme Court Judge. As it is necessary for the proper performance and administration of justice in the country to appoint another Judge, the question of another £1,700 a year is a mere bagatelle compared with the expenditure of £10,000 on the fruitless work of Royal Commissions. I have said, and pretty well every member has said in his own district, that the public are entitled to Circuit Courts at regular intervals, so that justice can be administered cheaply and be within reach



of all. True, Circuit Courts sit at Kalgoolie, and there is no reason why courts of quarter sessions should not sit at Bunbury, at Albany, at Geraldton, or at any place which the railway system taps. It is in the best interests of the country and of the proper administration of justice that another Supreme Court Judge should be appointed. It is inexpedient to appoint resident magistrates as Supreme Court Judges, and I hope it will not be repeated in the future. I trust this Government or any other Government will regard it as one of the most important matters in the future that should receive attention. Besides the work of the Arbitration Court to-day the Full Court list is in arrears, which is very detrimental to the best interests of the country. There are cases which have been ready for argument on appeal for over six months, and I believe, although Mr. Justice Parker, when Acting Chief Justice, did make the statement to the Government that the Judges were able to keep abreast of the work, I think if he were asked whether the Judges could carry on the Circuit Courts work which I have indicated should be undertaken by the Judges, he would say it was impossible. I think a very strong case exists to-day for the appointment of another Judge.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: Would not that lessen the work in Perth?

At 6:30, the ACTING PRESIDENT left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

HON. M. L. MOSS (continuing): I desire to make a correction with regard to the expenses of these Commissions. Of course these papers were laid on the table only to-day, and it is pardonable if I made a mistake quite unintentionally when I made the assertion that these Commissions cost the country £4,968 in commissioners' fees, and in printing £1,224, making £6,192. It seems I am somewhat in error, because at the bottom of this statement of the fees received by the commissioners the total cost comes to £1,311; consequently the figures I have given are apparently the total, and we have not, therefore, to add the cost of secretarial work and printing. But the return is so inadequate, so incomplete,

that my error is quite pardonable. In my desire to be absolutely fair in this, as I believe I am in other matters, I think it is only proper that I should make this correction. Last session this House passed a resolution protesting against the Government taking a side in industrial disputes, the House then being of opinion that the duty of the Government is to steer a middle course in these things, because one can picture in any industrial dispute of great moment the duty of the Government might be to preserve law and order in the community, which is the Government's first duty, and it will become a difficult matter for the Government to adopt that stand of impartiality which everybody expects them to take up on such an occasion, if when an industrial dispute takes place we find the Minister for Labour battling either for the employer or employed. So last session this House objected to the Government doing what they did in connection with the Potosi mine. There was a threat by the Minister that he would do the same thing with Detmold, Limited. I should have thought that the protest which came from this branch of Parliament would have been a sufficient lesson for the Government or the Minister in charge of that department to induce him to refrain from other matters of a similar character, and I regret exceedingly that any Minister of the Crown should have permitted himself to be drawn into such a correspondence as took place between the Minister for Labour and Messrs. Holmes. Any person who has read that correspondence must come to the conclusion that the Government took up an attitude which they were not justified in doing, and they were repeating that which the House objected to last session. Whenever I find the Government interfering with a matter which does not concern them I shall protest against it, and I do on this occasion, as I did previously. It is a great pity that although money can be found for Royal Commissions, and £5,000 a year apparently to run the Department of Labour, a pressing matter like the completion of the Lunatic Asylum at Claremont does not occupy the Government's attention. These reports are put upon the table of the House. Seeing the mass of stuff that comes here no member can be expected to go through

it all, but I respectfully ask the members of the House to take that short report from Dr. Montgomery, Inspector General of the Insane, and read the statements contained on page 5. He there says:—

During this year the workshops and stores in connection with the proposed New Hospital at Claremont were completed, and at present afford accommodation for 85 patients. This has to a certain extent relieved the extreme congestion at Fremantle, yet the overcrowding there is worse than it was when the Royal Commission condemned the buildings and deplored the overcrowding five years ago. Although these 85 patients have been removed to Claremont, there are 70 more accommodated in Fremantle Hospital for the Insane than there were when the Commission visited that institution. Some idea of the overcrowding may be gathered from the fact that there is not a single sitting-room in the building for the use of the patients, all the available room being taken up for providing sleeping accommodation.

Lower down the report says:—

At the present rate of progress the institution at Claremont will not be completed for at least eight or nine years and meanwhile the numbers are increasing at Fremantle, and the congestion there is becoming worse.

Until the Hospital at Claremont is completed we cannot hope that the insane in this State can receive anything like proper and scientific treatment, while the cost of maintenance will remain high, scattered as the patients are over the country in buildings unsuited to the purpose for which they at present are used.

Then I see from looking at that report that over £2,000 last year was received for patients' fees. It is hardly a fair thing that the institution should be stigmatised by its own head in the way it is when the Government are charging for a large number of patients, and in my opinion, and certainly in the opinion of every other person, the patients cannot be getting the full value they are entitled to for the money. It is an awful disgrace to this country that while we find money to build mints, to improve the park on Mount Eliza, for the Zoo and a hundred and one other things, the dictates of humanity have not allowed us to do more for the institution to which I refer. There is no blame attachable to the late Government at all; I cast no blame upon the preceding Governments; but cannot something be done with an idea of alleviating the present tension with regard to that institution?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It will be done.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I am delighted to hear the Minister give that assurance. I know he gives that assurance with a full responsibility of what he says. I believe there is no more pressing work in the State, and one which we as reasonably charitable people should give attention to, than the completion of that building at Claremont. I trust that next time there is a report from Dr. Montgomery with regard to this matter he will have an opportunity of saying something very much more flattering to the Government than we have before us at the present time. Members may observe from observations by the Chief Justice that there is something which must operate very detrimentally to business people with regard to Sections 41 and 42 of the Stamp Act. It has been decided that unless the stamp is actually upon a bill at the time the maker signs it, it cannot be stamped on its coming into the possession of the payee; and it is rather a serious state of affairs for banking people and business people in the country that people should be enabled to get out of a just liability in consequence of a technical defect. It becomes a very serious matter in this State when you think of the number of transactions which occur in a place like Murchison and in the North, where not only are stamps unprocurable but no bills are procurable, and I have seen ordinary paper used. There is a feeling that there should be an immediate amending of the statute; and it should not rest with a private member to carry out a duty of that kind. I earnestly hope that the leader of the House will consult with the Treasurer with regard to this matter, and that when he replies at the end of this debate a promise will be given that the Government will deal with the question. For while it is the duty of Parliament to see that the revenue is not defrauded, there is no reason why these obstacles should be put in the way of business people recovering payment they are justly entitled to. There is only one other point I wish to touch on in conclusion. The Premier told us at Subiaco that he was going to bring in some legislation to deal with unregistered race-

courses. There is nothing in the Speech with regard to that, and I desire to say that I shall co-operate most cordially with the Government in stamping out what the Premier has designated as an unmitigated evil. I agree that it is doing great mischief in the country. If the Government intend to carry out that portion of their policy outlined at Subiaco I will assist them to draw the necessary measure to do the following : in order to prevent further racecourses being started in this State unless proper licenses are obtained, and also to immediately stop those unregistered courses. I am treading on tender ground when I do this, because there is one of these unregistered courses in my own district, and there are influential gentlemen interested in it who will not relish my observations in regard to the subject. But I will do my best to stamp out an evil most injurious to the people in that district, and the same thing obtains elsewhere. There is far too much racing in the community. I do not desire to pose as a moralist in any respect. A certain amount of racing may be all right, but this handful of people cannot keep going the huge army there is living upon it. Something must be done to stamp the evil out. The Premier is to be complimented on the observations he made. I hope from the observations I have made generally that members sitting on these benches do not consider I look with fear on the future of this State. That is not the case, for while I have some things to commend, and others to condemn, I really believe that even with a certain amount of bad administration nothing can prevent this State from progressing. Wonderful possibilities there are, and if the country is only left alone reasonably and enabled to work out its own destiny, if we do not tinker with it too much in the way of artificial legislation, I believe it is bound to go ahead. The prospects are better to-day than ever they have been. We have greater population and greater revenue than ever we have had, and with economy and careful administration we are bound to send this country ahead by leaps and bounds. I have no fear for the future. While I am prepared to give my support to some of the proposals in this Speech, the Government may rest assured that those I feel strongly should not be placed on the

statute-book will receive at my hands the opposition which I have already indicated.

HON. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) : After listening to the eloquent speech by my friend Mr. Moss, and bearing in mind that he has covered an immense amount of ground and has touched on many defects, and has suggested remedies in many instances, I think it would be presumption on my part to enlarge much on what he has said ; but I consider that Mr. Moss has sounded a warning note, a thing that has been in my mind for a long time. I shall refer to the subjects in the Governor's Speech and follow with references to some remarks by Mr. Moss. In the Governor's Speech reference is made to the progress of this State. The State is all right enough so far as it goes, but there are some things that I do not like the look of. The Governor in his Speech says that mining is going on all right enough. Gold mining may be, and I am prepared to say that I do not know very much about it ; but one thing I wish to touch upon particularly, that being coal mining. Of course all members are aware of the troubles existing there ; troubles that it was for the Arbitration Act to amend ; troubles that the Arbitration Act could have been asked to remedy, and should remedy ; but it appears that this is not so ; that notwithstanding the Arbitration Act the trouble is there, and in a very acute form. It exists to such an extent that unless something is done, and that very shortly, that industry is going to the wall. It is an open secret now that the people who have invested their money in that industry have made nothing or but very little out of it. What they did make they spent on machinery or improving their mine, and they have not so far got anything out of it. It is also an open secret that the men who are working the coal from that mine can and do make from 15s. to £1 per day ; but I am not going to state half the truth, which may be, so to speak, dealing with the matter falsely, but I will say this, that while those men who are working can make from 15s. to 20s. per day, they only do get about three days a week. Hence the men are not to blame because they want that wage. Here within the State and under our noses is an industry, and we have gone to the expense of getting an expert report on it.

Unfortunately that report, like many others, simply lies on the table and very little action is taken in the matter. At the same time, it strengthens the position I took up some years ago, that when the coal is there it is in the interests of the country it should be worked. We want to demonstrate to these workmen that if they are prepared to get that coal out at a cost of 3s. a ton less than it at present costs they will thereby increase the demand for the coal. We are bound to ask ourselves the reason why the Commissioner of Railways refuses to take the coal. The answer is simple. It is acknowledged, and has been known for years, that the coal is 25 per cent. less in value for steaming purposes than Newcastle coal; and no one can blame Mr. George for refusing to take the coal. My contention is that the Government should do their best to demonstrate to these men that if they are prepared to work for a lower figure, at the expiry of six days they will have more money than by working three days under present conditions. I need hardly draw the attention of business men to this fact, that it is not so much what the workmen will make by the output of one ton of coal that makes the money, but it is the number of tons put out. We want to get the coal out and produce it at a commercial value, at about 3s. or 4s. less than the other coal costs, and to place it on the market at its true commercial value. Then, instead of 300 or 400 men working three days a week, we would have 700 or 800 men working full time, and we will be on the right track in trying to improve the industry. Another aspect of that question argued in some quarters is the establishment of a State coal mine. Of all things we do not want a State-owned mine. It is recognised all round that if the Government want anything done they pay 25 per cent. more than it could be done for by private individuals. Dr. Jack will bear out what I say. I am not repeating his argument. It has always been mine. We will never have any industry of that kind run by the Government, because it will cost the Government so much more. It is altogether out of the question to talk about State-owned mines. There are some gentlemen who are very much opposed to Collie coal because of its liability to set

fire to districts. Speaking with experience on the matter, I say it is perfectly feasible and reasonable that none of the Collie coal should be used in the agricultural areas during the six months of the year when they are liable to catch fire. In the South-West we take no notice of a fire. If it starts a few miles away we are perfectly aware that it is not a matter of concern for us because it will not reach us. It is not so in the Eastern Districts. If we use Newcastle coal in districts where Collie coal is said to be liable to set fire to the place, and if a fire occurs and the Government can show it was caused by the Newcastle coal, the prejudice against Collie coal will in some way diminish. The Treasurer admits that our finances require watching. Mr. Daglish last year was twitted with saying that we must observe a "mark-time" policy, and his Ministry was called a "mark-time" Ministry; but I admire the man for that expression, though he was jeered at. He knew then perfectly well that the State was in such a position that we would have to be careful. But I do not like this about the Ministry: they knew then that the finances required watching, but I fail to understand the consistency in now going the whole hog and talking about spending money when they have little prospect of getting it. I commend Mr. Daglish for his "mark-time" policy. I cannot commend him for his present policy. Perhaps some members think the Government are to blame for the decrease of the surplus and for leaving the State with a deficiency at present; but it has been an open secret that for some years past we have been spending a lot more money than our revenue warranted us in spending. If it were my business and I was spending money in the way it has been spent in this State, I should unhesitatingly say that we are going to the dogs, and that fast. As an old colonist, I have every faith in the State. The country is good enough; but the modern trend of legislation, the way things are working, and the reckless way we are spending our money are calculated to kill any place on the face of the earth. Mr. Moss sounded a warning note about the different Commissions. I would not so much mind taxation provided the country got the benefit of it; but when we see the money

frittered away in the way it is it is bad, and someone is wanted to lay a hand on the spot where the faults exist, and to say : "Whether I fall or stand, I am going to put a stop to it." That is the policy we want. No person in a private enterprise would allow things to go on as they are going on in this State. It is not that the place is bad. It is good. But we want an economical man at the head of the Government to see that money is not frittered away. With regard to Commissions I ask, "Do we get the value of these things? Do we act on their recommendations?" For instance, we had a Royal Commission on the Civil Service. How many recommendations of that Commission were acted on? What did it cost? In short, what did we get for the cost of that Commission? The cost and the actual benefit received were altogether out of proportion. Another matter I desire to speak on is the proposed land tax. I have heard a good deal of talk about getting people on the land. That sort of talk is generally indulged in by those who know the least about it. It is getting to be a claptrap saying "Get the people on the land." It is all right. I say that farming or agriculture is going to be the backbone of the place and one of our sheet anchors; but we want discretion and do not want on one hand to say to intending settlers, "Here is land free from any taxation; we will almost give it to you," while at the same time we are attempting such a thing as is suggested in the Governor's Speech—a tax on unimproved values of land. Whenever that comes in I shall oppose it. Not that it will affect me in the least. I am like the proverbial man with 160 acres and a cow. I have a few acres and a few cattle; and it will not affect me in the least; but the tax is going to be against the best interests of the State. Through the reckless expenditure we are obliged to resort to land taxes; but with proper economy our revenue should be quite sufficient to carry us along, and we ought also to have something left to carry out reproductive works. We look back and see that the expenditure has been exceeding the revenue for the last three or four years; and I say it is time, as Mr. Daglish says, that our finances want closely watching. We want more than words. We want deeds. There is

another question on which I am cautious, because it would be out of place to talk very much about the matter now. I refer to the purchase of the Midland Railway. I believe the Government should hold every railway in the State and also the Post and Telegraph Department. Outside that the Government should do nothing. Therefore, I unhesitatingly say, if the price be reasonable and we get value for the money, of which we shall be able to judge when the reports are before us, that I should be in favour of the purchase of the railway, but not at far and away more than the value. Some years ago we purchased the Great Southern Railway, I believe at about two-thirds of the price asked for this railway. I am not in a position to say that this railway is not worth that large amount, but it is one of those things we want to be guarded against. I will not express any opinion farther than that if the price be reasonable we should be in favour of the purchase of the railway, because I believe we should own it. With regard to the Legislative Council I do not wish to say anything, because it seems somewhat like sounding our own trumpets to say that we are absolutely necessary; but I could not help thinking, when Mr. Moss was speaking about the bad Bills sent down here, or that wanted careful revision, about one Bill that came down to us some two years ago and which was repeated last year with the same defects in it. Even though he may not be a settler and may not know stock, Mr. Moss would understand perfectly when I tell him what was in the Bill until it was altered last year. It was the Brands Bill, and set forth very plainly that if a person impounded stock belonging to another and the owner of the stock could satisfy a justice of the peace that he was the owner, the stock would be released on the payment of the poundage fees and £1 per head for all stock. According to the definition of "stock" it was made very clear that stock meant sheep or cattle. The £1 was to go to the Consolidated Revenue. If a man impounded 500 sheep, on the owner paying a trespass fee of a penny per head and £500 he could have the sheep. I think it must be patent to anybody that it was either a case of gross neglect or one of incompetency. The matter was

set right last year by a member of another place at my suggestion. That in itself convinces me that although I am not a lawyer, there are many things in Bills placed before this House that need revising, and unfortunately there is too much experimental legislation creeping in at times. Referring now to the proposed referendum in regard to the Legislative Council, I say that when that appeal comes before us we will deal with it in a proper manner. There is another question referred to in the Speech, the Aborigines Protection Bill. A measure on that subject was before this House last session, and we took much trouble in trying to deal with it from a business-like standpoint; and in doing so we did not allow our feelings to be carried away by thinking that the natives were ill-used in every instance and never got justice, that the settlers were a lot of brutes unfit to control the aborigines. But we then asked for the report of a Royal Commission on the subject, and what have we got? We have got a report which has had this effect in the old country, that it represents us as a lot of barbarians; and I say that report has done us a lot of harm. It may have brought some things to light which needed exposure, but the report of that Commission seems to be somewhat of an *ex parte* statement, as is shown to a great extent by recent developments in the North. If we are to believe anything of what is reported from the North, it would appear that the blackfellow is not always a sufferer, but that he does at times get home on the white. The aborigines question is a difficult one to deal with, and if the Government really want to encourage settlement in the North where natives are numerous, then the Government must be in a position to ensure those settlers from molestation or interference by the blacks. It is manifest that you cannot have a dual control in a country like that, and there is only one course open. The powers that be must either protect the settlers in a proper manner, or they must return to the native population the lands which have been occupied by white settlers; and if the lands are given back to the aborigines there must be compensation to those white settlers who have invested money in those pastoral lands. We know that where whites and

blacks meet, some immoralities and irregularities will occur in spite of all that can be done. Either the black must be master or the white must be master, and the sooner that question is settled the better. We have to bear in mind that the whites will have to be protected, and it will cost an immense sum of money to do it. I hardly know what to recommend that should be done for the best, but I should like to see justice done to both whites and blacks in that country. The question is a difficult one, and I think that so far as the settlers are concerned the question is whether it would be better to prevent the white settlers from employing natives at all. We took their lands from them, and what are we going to give to the blacks in return if we do not employ them in labour? Suppose a lot of superior beings planted themselves down here and took all our property, what should we do in such a case? It is one thing to make a report of certain abuses that have come to light in regard to the treatment of natives in the North, and it is another thing to deal exhaustively and fairly with the question as a whole. There is one other matter in the Speech to which I have a decided objection. There are two State hotels in the country, and if State hotels are to be the order of the day, the best thing the Government can do will be to act as wet-nurse to everybody, take over all our businesses, our farms, our various industries. As to the Government managing these things, I say there are only two or three things that I would consent to the Government having anything to do with, and the running of a pub. is not one of them. Let it be clearly understood that the State pub. was not started by the present Government; but I have a suspicion that they have a tendency to support that sort of thing, and if so I am opposed to it. If the Government of the country look after and manage the public affairs properly, they will have enough to do without running State hotels. With regard to experimental laws, it is my opinion that what we want is a good deal less law. There are some laws which I approve of and have supported, but the making of laws is something like the question of Federation. I did not vote for Federation, but I would have been

one of the strongest advocates for it had it been one of those things we could take and try if we liked, or give it up. These experimental laws are not like that; for we know that when we pass an Act in this House experimentally, we can wipe it away whenever we like. Some of the experimental laws I supported, to show at the time that I am not hide-bound in regard to new ideas in legislation. What do members spend their time on in this House, but simply to make a lot of laws and find out that they need alteration. The Speech refers also to a proposal to build and manage a railway in the North-West by private enterprise. I must say, without finding fault, that I am absolutely astonished at a body of men for whom I have considerable respect in proposing a thing of this kind; for on the one hand they are negotiating for the purchase of a railway that was constructed by private enterprise years ago, upon exactly the same lines that are suggested in regard to this railway in the North-West—[MEMBER: No, no]—or it amounts to this, that the Government are going to give some concession to a company or a syndicate, they are going to place themselves in the hands of a private syndicate who have money to invest, the Government reserving the right of purchase later on. In fact they are going to get somebody else to construct a railway that they will have to buy back at a future time. We have had two instances of this; not that I say those were mistakes at the time the railways were built by private enterprise, because when those concessions were granted to private companies things were not as they are now in this State. We had then to go begging for persons to do things for us, and we had even to subsidise a paltry little steamer to run along the coast; but we have not to do that now, and so I say that to simply purchase with one hand a concession that was granted years ago, and to sell with the other hand a concession to a new company, is an action I disapprove of entirely. The Government propose to get out of one noose, and to put their head in another noose. [Interjection by Hon. C. A. Piesse.] We must build the line ourselves, because I say if it is good enough for us to guarantee and take the risk of granting a concession to a private com-

pany, it is good enough for us to spend our own money on it and stand to win in the transaction. As ordinary business men, we should bear in mind two examples we have had in railways built by private enterprise, the Great Southern and the Midland lines; and although it was wise in those days to grant those concessions because we wanted settlement and had to get it at any price, yet we are not now obliged to go begging round the country as we had to do then, and so I say we should build this line if it is to be built at all. I would like to back Mr. Moss up in the warning note he has sounded, that we are going too fast and it is time the brake was put on, and that in the future we should see that we do not spend more money than our income warrants.

HON. S. J. HAYNES (South-East): I propose to be exceedingly brief, after the very able and exhaustive speeches of members who have preceded me; and I refer particularly to the speech of Mr. Moss. Before touching on matters contained in the Speech of His Excellency, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Briggs, on your occupying the President's seat, a position which I feel sure you will fill with honour and dignity. At the same time, I regret the occasion of your being called upon to take that honourable position. I trust that our respected President, Sir George Shenton, will be restored to perfect health by his visit to the old country. I shall be as brief as possible, because it seems to me the Address-in-Reply is a purely formal matter, and binds us to very little. [HON. G. RANDELL: To nothing.] It may bind us to something; because we may express opinions before we know details, and may be sorry afterwards for having expressed those opinions. The Address-in-Reply is formal in many respects, because we approach it so guardedly; and its adoption is also a matter of form. As to the Speech, I cannot but be struck, in common with other members, by the difference between the original policy speech of the present Premier, published some 12 months ago, and referred to as the mark-time policy, and the proposals of great magnitude which this Speech embodies. When the Premier announced his original policy, I was impressed with its moderation in many respects, and above all I

was pleased with the mark-time policy, which I thought was needed, because in the past we had been spending too rapidly, and it was time that a different policy was pursued. That was only ten months ago; and now I am surprised at the change which has come over the opinion of the Government, and at the magnitude of their proposals. The pendulum has swung completely from one side to the other, the two policies being diametrically opposed; and while many of the proposals in the Governor's Speech are well worth considering, and may for the welfare of the State be given effect to someday, it must be obvious to the Ministry and to this House that the proposals cannot possibly be carried out in the near future. I prefer a mark-time policy, considering that with our small population, though it now reaches a quarter of a million, we had better progress slowly and surely rather than adopt a forced stroke, resulting in the heaping up of our public debt. Our future will then be surer and more satisfactory, because the day of reckoning does come, and then the pinch is felt. Though the Premier has abandoned his cautious views of ten months ago, it is satisfactory to note that he now has greater confidence in the State and a more cheerful outlook, judging by his present proposals in the Governor's Speech, which states that, as we all know, our large industries, mining, agricultural, pastoral, and others, are progressing in a manner on which we can but congratulate ourselves. That satisfactory report has been made, I am pleased to say, for many years past, and I hope it will be made for many to come. Undoubtedly our industries are prosperous and satisfactory; and the country throughout compares more than favourably with the Eastern States. But notwithstanding that, the very first item in the Speech reads, "The finances of the State will require your close attention;" and farther on we notice proposals for increased taxation—a tax on unimproved land values, and an income tax. I am thoroughly in accord with all the speakers who have preceded me in stating that I see no reason whatever for any increased taxation. Our immense revenue of over £3,600,000, considering our small population, is surely ample for any purpose; and all we need to keep on the right side

of the ledger is proper, careful, and safe administration. Shrewd business men with such an income, having regard to the small population, could surely make ends meet and at the same time promote the contentment, happiness, and progress of the people. I therefore think these proposals for fresh taxation in times of prosperity are altogether unsatisfactory. I am not opposed to an income tax in itself; but I think an income tax and an unimproved land tax are taxes which, if they must be imposed, should be imposed at a time of stress, not in a time of prosperity. And a time of trouble will come to us as it has come to the Eastern States. That will be the time to look round for taxation of an extreme character. Besides, the revenue that is apparently anticipated from those taxes is but small; and no doubt the cost of collection would be enormous compared with the result. As to the tax on unimproved land values at the present juncture, I am entirely averse to that. Everyone is in favour of putting the people on the land, giving them every inducement to go there, and encouraging them when there; yet here we are talking of taxing unimproved land. Whilst I would like to see the land improved, I like to see capital coming to the country and taking up the land, which in time the owner will improve, thus adding to the wealth of the State. I read the other day in the Press a report of the speech in which Mr. Patrick drew attention to a pamphlet published in London by our Agent General, and therefore inspired no doubt by the Government—a very good little publication, practically drawing attention to this State, and showing what an elysium it is for the farmer, seeing that it has no income tax and no land tax. Yet in a few months after the publication of that pamphlet, the Governor's Speech announces as the policy of the Government of the day a land tax and an income tax. I do not think the time has arrived for those taxes. I think that, with careful administration, we shall not only make ends meet, but shall wind up with a surplus at the year's end. The Speech contains a statement as to the purchase of the Midland Railway and lands. I quite recognise that there is a vast extent of valuable territory to be opened out to the selector under our very liberal land laws, and



the opening up of these lands would undoubtedly be a boon to the country. At the same time, we must look on such a proposal largely as a business proposition, and I think it is wise that I should follow the members who have preceded me and, before expressing an opinion on the purchase, wait to see the details; and if it be found that these are satisfactory, and that the purchase is wise from a financial aspect, I will vote for what I consider the best interests of the State. But the price will have to be fair; and it must be made clear that the purchase can be effected without detriment to the country. In common with other members, I shall wait for farther details before I commit myself. Another matter mentioned in the Speech is the referendum to ascertain the wishes of the people as to the retention of the bicameral Legislature, that is to say as to whether this House should be abolished, or, in the alternative, whether its franchise qualification should be reduced. Unhesitatingly I say I have no confidence, or very little, in a referendum. It is an unconstitutional proceeding; and I think it is, as a rule, an unfair instrument; an instrument, it seems to me, that may be used from time to time to take off responsibility which should rest on the Ministry of the day. I should also like to point out that if the referendum is to be taken it is apparently to be taken on two questions: first, "Are you in favour of the abolition of the Legislative Council?" Second, "Or, are you in favour of the reduction of the franchise for that House?" I disagree with the referendum in any form; but I say that to submit the question in that form will be most unfair and most unsatisfactory; for if the first question is answered in the negative, then the second must be answered in the affirmative. The referendum is a most unconstitutional mode of proceeding.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: No opportunity will be given the people to state whether they are satisfied with the House as it is.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: They give them the opportunity by saying "Yes; we wish to retain it." I say, in the event of the people saying "No" to the first question, in regard to the franchise the answer must be in the affirmative. It is a kind

of "heads I win tails you lose" on a referendum of that kind. As far as constitutional reform is concerned, I think it should be arrived at by constitutional means, and those constitutional means should rest in the hands of the thrifty in the State, the better class in the State. They should put other members into the House and the reform must be through them. With respect to the franchise, I submit we have as liberal a franchise as there is in Australia. It is no use my referring to the franchise in Victoria or in Queensland, because none is more liberal than our own. If we are to reduce the franchise for this House we shall alter the very character of the House, and that seems to be the defect in the present Federal Constitution. We should have men of like ideas in both Houses. The very character of the House would be altered. In view of what I have said, I see no reason whatever for a reduction of the franchise. The next matter referred to in the Speech is a big question indeed, and I do not think previous speakers have referred to it at length, but it has been referred to. The Speech indicates that a measure for the establishment of old age pensions will be brought forward. That is one of those questions which should be approached with gravity and care. I doubt, with the experience which some of the Eastern States have had of the working of old age pension schemes, that it will be at all satisfactory. I think if an old age pension scheme be carried out to any great extent it will tend to breed pauperism, and give us in the future a more difficult problem to tackle than the Poor Laws in the old country have been for many years past. It seems to me an old age pension scheme might be anything but an encouragement to thrift. If a Bill for the granting of pensions comes before the House I shall give it close attention. At present I think it would be better for the State if the conditions were improved for the poor and the improvident were made more comfortable. That would be more advantageous to the State than a far-reaching and evil-reaching scheme like an old age pension scheme. To give anything like an effective pension in the State, particularly in this State where there are so many adults, would be a serious incubus on the State. As to the liquor traffic, I sympathise with most

right-thinking men on the evils attending the drink traffic, and I would do all in my power to minimise the evil, but I do not think the evil effects will be minimised by State ownership. So far the experiment in this State has been most unsatisfactory indeed. It seems to me it does not matter what Acts of Parliament are passed in regard to the liquor trade or anything else, it comes to the one thing, that unless the Acts are properly administered they will not be a success. If our present Licensing Acts were properly administered, I do not think there would be any necessity for an amendment. We have ample provision for local option, and there is also provision as to the quality of liquor sold, and I think if the present Acts were properly administered things would work satisfactorily. There would be greater discretion on the part of licensing benches in granting licenses and compelling hotels to keep respectable and reasonable accommodation for the travelling public, not as we find at present—hotels run for the bar trade alone. When a man goes to an hotel with his wife and family he is regarded as an intruder and he feels most uncomfortable. If hotels were better looked after and licenses cancelled if conveniences were not found in the way of board and lodging, there would be less cause for complaint. In hotels, the quality of the liquor sold ought to be as well looked after as the quality of our food is. If these matters were looked after it would promote what we desire, far greater temperance, and there would be no need for drastic or novel methods. There is a proposal to build a line of railway from Port Hedland to Nullagine, and I may say the proposal in the Speech in regard to that line I am averse to. It practically amounts to a purchase by the Government, and I think that would be exceedingly unsatisfactory. The proposal is for those who take up the venture to build the line and the Government are to guarantee a certain interest on the cost. I see that evils may crop up, and this State may be saddled with a very serious outlay for interest. I am not averse to the building of the line by private enterprise, indeed I am thoroughly in favour of it; but the enterprise I desire to attract is the enterprise of contractors to build the line, taking all the risk and

running it, and the Government protecting the public by limiting the rates. If the venture pays, and I hope it will, then the company will benefit, but the company must take the risk. I am satisfied the proposal in the Speech would work unsatisfactorily. I may say I advocate the encouragement of private enterprise in every respect. The more we throw on private enterprise and the less on the Government, the better for our people. What do we find in the State at the present time, and this is the trend all through Australia?—that the people throw very little on private enterprise and all they can on the Government. We are breeding a race which will not be self-reliant. We know it is impossible to do everything by private enterprise on account of the sparse population, but now that population is increasing somewhat, I say, throw as much as we can on private enterprise and we shall breed a better race, and there will be greater welfare in the State. It seems to me the tendency is to level everything down and to destroy any encouragement to industry and energy. That was not the method our forefathers adopted when they came to Australia. They had to be self-reliant and to depend on the capital which they brought with them. I trust the time will come when this tendency to throw everything on the Government will break down of its own weight. Before such a disaster awaits the State I hope our legislators in their wisdom will retrace their steps and go back to the principle that brought our forefathers to the front in the old days. The proposed expenditure contemplated by the Speech is enormous. Where are we to get the money from? We know the recent loan was a disastrous flotation. The money came to the State at £93. When we have an object-lesson like that—the difficulty of getting money—it shows we must economise. We must have exceedingly careful administration and avoid borrowing as far as possible. And certainly with the income we have, I fail to see any necessity to borrow to the extent we have done in the past and to the extent which seems contemplated in the Address. I do not propose to detain the House more. I have only given a few general remarks with respect to the

Address. The matters have been dealt with pretty lengthily by others, and very ably. I, like others, think we may consider ourselves exceedingly blessed in being in the state of prosperity we are in. I am perfectly satisfied that this State is one of the greatest of the lot, and it has great potentialities if properly managed, if we are not afraid to attract population. There seems to be a tendency to erect a barricade to keep out population. We want population of the right kind. We want to attract men with a little capital if we can, and give them every encouragement. One of the methods of attracting them would no doubt be the circulation of literature, not voluminous matter but small pamphlets distributed in London, and by seeing that passages out are exceedingly moderate. That seems to be one of the greatest handicaps against Western Australia and one of the greatest factors in regard to Canada. So far as Canada is concerned there is no doubt she has very rich land and forests and great wealth, but she has a very severe climate in most parts. As regards this State we have any amount of good land open for selection for a much greater population than we have at present, for many millions, so far as that is concerned; at any rate, thousands and tens of thousands. If we can attract the right class, they will, I am perfectly satisfied, be contented, and they will have one of the finest climates in the world and one of the best markets. We do not want to attract the useless or the hangers-about-town, if we can help it. I repeat, we want population of the right type, and I am sorry nothing is mentioned in the Speech. No doubt the Government have carefully considered the matter, but I am sorry nothing is mentioned with a view to attracting immigrants of the right class. I think there is scope and opening for thousands, but at the same time I must admit—I am sorry to admit it and sorry to notice it—that it seems there is a desire on the part of the so-called Labour class—because it is only a name—to keep population out of the State. One would think that the smaller the population the wealthier the State was. I say, attract as much population as we can, and if we get population of the right type, with capital as much as possible, this State will go on as it has done in the

past, by leaps and bounds, in fact by greater leaps and bounds than it has done. We should open out all the avenues we possibly can for the attraction of men with capital to this place. I repeat that we should not put barricades in the way. In many instances there are tendencies to restriction, even amongst shipping. Surely shipping ought to be made as free as possible. We ought to attract as many vessels as we can. They do not come for fun or amusement, but simply for what they can carry, for commerce. I would also say this, that we have not been at all blessed in the past with a paucity of legislation. I think that if in the future the Government, whoever is in power, would simply spend less time in legislation and more in administration it would be much better for this State. We find that there is a tendency in all Parliaments, and I think particularly in ours, to be always introducing some novelties, to get them on the statute-book, and before these novelties have had reasonable trial, members want something else. So it goes on, and we find statutes are passed year after year which it is impossible to read thoroughly, let alone to grasp even by those who have to deal with them, and how the general public are to handle them or escape trouble sometimes I really do not know. It seems to me that we pass legislation one session and the very next session we are tinkering with it again. Look at our statute-book at present, and it will be found to be honeycombed with alterations and amendments. Unless we are very careful it will cause serious trouble to those using them. It would be well to have less of these novelties; and let us simply encourage, as far as possible, private enterprise, and throw as much as we can upon the energies of the people. We have a prosperous State, and I am perfectly satisfied that in it we have great potentialities of wealth. I think that our goldfields at present are only scratched. There are potentialities there. Our pastoral pursuits can be increased enormously, and our agricultural pursuits also can be increased. My respected friend here (the Colonial Secretary) is well acquainted with the South-West District, where the country has been opened up by leaps and bounds. It is very gratifying to my friend, and it must be gratifying

to us too. There is great scope, great potentiality. All it wants is enterprise and the right stamp of men, with less legislation and less crowding of the statute-book. As I have done in the past, I shall vote on all measures which come before this House for what I consider the true welfare of the State. I may say before I sit down that I deplore the clap-trap cry which is repeatedly raised against this Chamber that we are retarders of legislation, that we are a stumbling-block, that we are a set of fossils. If we ever have erred, and we have erred repeatedly, erred grossly in the past, it has been on the side of liberality, giving way to measures which we should not have given way to. I think that we have acted liberally, and in my opinion too rapidly; but as to referring to us as retarders of legislation, no act can be pointed to in regard to which we have really retarded legislation or retarded the true welfare of this State. It is purely a clap-trap cry. In conclusion, I am entirely in accord with the concluding portion of this Speech at least: I join in trusting that, aided by divine direction, we shall materially advance the welfare of the State.

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan): There is little need for me to address myself to the proposals contained in the Governor's Speech at length, as members who have preceded me have dealt very fully with, I believe, every question that is included in its paragraphs. I would like to join with members who have spoken in condolence with our President on account of his absence, and to join in congratulating you, sir, on being elected Acting President. I am very much of the same opinion as the member who has just sat down, and others who have spoken at very considerable length, and who have, I think, dealt fairly with the subject-matter included in the Address. To go into the whole of the clauses embraced in these two pages is entirely unnecessary, because we shall probably have, at least I take it we shall have, in due course of time the measures which are suggested here placed before us in Bills, and that will be a much better, more effective, and more proper time for dealing with them, when we are acquainted with the details of those measures. We may perhaps now arrive at

conclusions that may be wrong with regard to them, for I think the Speech bears on the face of it vagueness in almost every paragraph, and it will be impossible, I consider, for anyone to express an opinion upon the details of the measures to be dealt with until a later period. With reference to the attention which has been drawn to the finances, I think it is a pity, as members have already said, that the present Government could not have seen its way to keep within the bounds of the revenue raised. It is most unfortunate, especially for this country, that we should be told there is a deficit on the year. I am earnestly of opinion that it could have been avoided. We have had no information to lead us to believe that the business of the country was not sufficiently under the control of Ministers to keep them within the bounds of the revenue; and when we remember that the expenditure has exceeded the revenue by nearly £130,000 the thing looks worse still. The deficit is actually £45,000, but to that has to be added the surplus which the Government had in hand. The Government took office or at least began the year—I am not quite prepared to say they had it when they took office—with that surplus. I think possibly they had the surplus in hand when they took office, and I consider it is to be deplored that we are landed in a state of things which has not existed since I believe 1897. [THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1898.] No; in 1898 we began to recover. I think there was a great deal of trepidation in the mind of the then Premier with regard to the state of things, but he faced the matter, and I think that before 1898 he had retrieved the position and we entered on a period which can only be characterised as a most progressive and prosperous one. To get a setback in 1905 is a very serious matter for the consideration of Parliament, and perhaps the Government are right in inviting the attention of Parliament and the country to this state of things. I hope that we shall seriously and earnestly face the position. I have not the slightest doubt that this State can very soon retrieve the position, and instead of closing the year's finances with a deficit, we can conclude the present year with a surplus in hand. I suppose it is not good government to close the year with a very large surplus, unless

there happens to be some windfall which is not expected, and these do not come our way very often. Therefore the object is to cut our garment as nearly as we possibly can according to our cloth. We find a Treasurer's estimate of surplus sometimes as low as £1,000, sometimes a little more, but generally speaking Treasurers have followed Mr. Gladstone's maxim and over-estimated the expenditure and under-estimated the revenue, and have managed to close generally with a larger surplus than that promised to Parliament. I did anticipate when the Government took office they would have refrained from going into the market to borrow to a considerable extent; but we find here that they are going to emulate the example of some who have gone before them and some of the politicians in the Eastern States, and are proposing to go in for a large measure of borrowing. I have always thought that Australia is utterly wrong in the borrowing proclivities which it has manifested. I can only think the end of it will be disastrous; at any rate I am quite sure the position of these States by and by will be very serious if this policy is continued. We ought to provide expenditure from the enormous revenue the Governments are getting out of the people, considering the population and comparing it with the older countries of the world, in Europe for instance. They should try to keep within the revenue, and I am quite sure that a large number of these public works could be provided for from public revenue, without laying up for themselves the trouble which I anticipate will be met with in the future. We learn from the Bill that passed through the House this afternoon that work which can by no means be described as reproductive has been done by taking money from loan funds. I refer to the dredging and embankment in Perth Water. It is a very desirable, useful, and beneficial work, no doubt, to the inhabitants of Perth, and it will, to some extent, beautify the city, though artistic eyes may perhaps object to the straight lines our Government engineers are providing along the banks of the river. When the work is finished, no doubt it will be of great advantage and will confer a great amount of pleasure on the citizens of Perth, and to some extent to the

visitors who come here, and to the inhabitants of other parts of the State; but it is pre-eminently a work that should be done from the current revenue of the State. I certainly object to works of this description or the erection of buildings being charged to loan funds. I regret the Ministry have departed from their original intention not to go into the money market, at any rate not for more than half a million of money a year. This was first set out by the late Premier, and apparently the present Ministry are in accord with him in that matter. If all these public works are to be undertaken it implies borrowing large sums of money, if we can obtain it from the London market. There seems to be some difficulty as to whether we can go to the English market with advantage for some years to come. I am opposed to the principle of extending the works over two or three years. I was always opposed to that principle. Sir John Forrest, when he brought forward his proposals, must have known that they could not have been executed in the year in which he applied for the money. I think it is misleading, and I object to it as it is fraught with danger and evil to the community at large. I do not think we should impose new taxation until it is absolutely necessary; but there is one thing: I think that if we do not institute direct taxation, the Federal Government will come in and anticipate us, and probably deprive us of a source of supply which might be useful in the future.

HON. M. L. MOSS: You need not fear that. They have got these taxes all over Australia.

HON. G. RANDELL: I do not object to an income tax if there be any necessity for it, or to any direct tax imposed on proper lines; but an income tax, to be fair in its collection, should go down much lower than some people anticipate or intend it should. At any rate, it should go down as low as £150. Possibly we may have a graduated income tax. Most income taxes include something like that. It is in the minds of some persons who exercise a great influence on the Ministry of the day that income secured from personal efforts should be taxed lower than that derived from rents or other sources. I am entirely opposed to a tax on unimproved land values. When

we are trying to increase the number of persons on the land it seems contradictory; and I think it will have a bad effect, and may possibly deter many desirable settlers from coming here and settling in our midst. Certainly it would discount the remarks made by the Agent General that immigrants would be coming to a country where there is no land or income tax. I object to the word "unimproved." Last session I pointed out that it was a misnomer. At any rate, it does not convey to many minds what is the intention of the Government. I have no hesitation in saying there is no such thing as an unimproved land tax. Is it intended to fix the values on the original values fixed by the Crown, or on the value now fixed by the Crown? If the latter, there must have been improvement. At present, the proposal to tax land is to be deprecated. There is no need to say much about the Midland Railway purchase. If it will be of benefit to the country I think every member will agree the line and the lands should be secured, if the terms be fair and reasonable. I regret there is a determination in some quarters to force the matter and get a hasty decision. That is to be regretted, but I do not think it will have any effect on the minds of members in this House. We will carefully consider the price named, and will make ourselves acquainted with the values fixed on the land and be able to see, without any doubt, what we are getting for the money before we pay. It is desirable to get rid of a private company running a railway between two parts of our system; and no doubt the line will be more helpful to the interests of the State at large in the hands of the Government than in the hands of a company that appears to have been inclined to disregard any duty placed on it, and which has received at the hands of the Government every consideration in carrying out its enterprise. I think I need say little in regard to the referendum. We have had one specimen of a referendum, and we do not want another. I believe if we could reverse the decision of that referendum to-day, the large numbers who voted for Federation then would be found voting against it to-day. This idea of a referendum is taking out of the hands of Ministers and Parlia-

ment, who are responsible, the control of affairs and confiding it to the hands of others who are apt to be led away by the cry of leaders, and apt to arrive at conclusions without the opportunity of getting the knowledge that members of Parliament are able to secure. In that sense it is an unsatisfactory method of dealing with public questions that are of infinite importance to the interests of the State. I look upon it as a piece of impertinence—if I may be allowed to say that of any matter in the Governor's Speech—on the part of some people to take up this question in the manner done. There has been no occasion when this Council has stood in the way of progress. We may have been of advantage in the improving of measures in the best interests of the country, and whoever is elected to the Council should endeavour to discharge that duty. It is earnestly desirable that the franchise should not be lowered. To have the two Houses of Parliament upon the same franchise, or very nearly so, seems to me to be absurd. We see it operating in the Commonwealth Parliament, where the Senators are elected on the same suffrage as the members of the House of Representatives, though the former represent a State as a whole; and there we find a condition of affairs which is not for the benefit of Australia as a whole. I do not think it necessary to labour the question. Every member will agree that there is necessity to have a Chamber of revision, and one that is effectual. If both Houses were elected on the same franchise there would be no necessity to have the Houses sitting separately. It would be better for them to sit together and discuss matters and arrive at conclusions. But then, what would prevent hasty and ill-considered legislation coming into effect without any House of review? There would certainly be the veto of the Governor; but he would hesitate to express that veto on a measure passed by the Parliament of the country. It would only be used by him as a last resource. I am favourable to an amendment of the licensing laws in the direction of local option. We have at the present time a local option law which is useful if carried out; but our dependence is largely on the magistrates, though I am pleased to say they are realising the

position now much more than in years gone by, so that there is some stop to the indiscriminate granting of licenses throughout the State. My view is that we should educate public opinion. I have told the temperance people that it is the only way they can get a change in the licensing laws that will be beneficial to the people, for then it will be carried out by public opinion, which would be better than legislating against public opinion. We may deplore the curse of drink, but at the same time we cannot get people to change their ideas, except by appealing to their reasoning faculties. With regard to the proposed Arbitration Act Amendment Bill, we cannot say whether it will be a needful measure or not at present; but at present the Act is being administered in a most efficient way. I regret to see some of the expressions of opinion emanating in certain quarters regarding a Judge presiding over the Arbitration Court; but I believe from what I read a few days ago they are changing their opinions, and seeing that the Judge is endeavouring to administer the Act in accordance with the spirit of the law and justice and right to both parties. I certainly think that the Judge is a man well acquainted with the law and with business, and he is satisfactory to the disinterested people in the State.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It is a very thankless position to fill.

HON. G. RANDELL: I think it is desirable, if we can do so by any means, to secure the construction of the Port Hedland railway. Port Hedland is a useful little port that a vessel can get into very easily; and I feel certain that there is a large amount of mineral wealth in the country to be served by the railway. Development will follow the construction of the line. It will be of immense advantage to that part of the country, whilst it will advance the interests of the southern part of the State. We must also take into consideration the isolation of that district. If we can by any means arrive at a fair and reasonable arrangement to construct the line, no member of this House will hesitate to support it. We have sufficient lawyers here with knowledge and skill. Similar work for a syndicate has been too much for one of the ablest men

in this country, but every care should be taken that the agreement should be fair, and that it should be carried out. If we can do that, I do not see any great difficulty in securing a proper agreement for the construction of the line. At any rate Parliament will be afforded an opportunity of considering it; and if the proposal when it comes before us is on the lines indicated in the Governor's Speech, I think it will be satisfactory. I do not know anything that looks better on paper than the proposal there set forth; and if these proposed arrangements are carried out, I think nothing but good will be the result. There are some members who know better, perhaps, the potentialities of the State: we certainly ought to develop that district. We are placed in Parliament as members charged with the care of the interests of the whole of the State, and our endeavour should be to foster and help in developing as far as we can all the interests of the State.

On motion by HON. C. E. DEMPSTER, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 18 minutes past 9 o'clock, until the next day.

### Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 19th July, 1905.

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| Address-in-Reply, debate resumed; Amendment on the Amendment moved by Mr. Moran ...         | 198 |
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MR. SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1, Report of the Royal Commission on Immigration.