

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 27th October, 1897.

Resignation of Attorney General: Ministerial Statement; Standing Orders Suspension; Vacancy of Seat for Greenough—Paper Presented—Motion: Leave of Absence—Public Notaries Bill: first reading—Dog Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Sale of Liquors Amendment Bill: first reading—Circuit Courts Bill: first reading—Employment Brokers Bill: first reading—Industrial Statistics Bill: first reading—Cemeteries Bill: first reading—Noxious Weeds Bill: first reading—Motion: Return re Comparative Tariffs—Address-in-Reply to Governor's Speech: sixth day of debate; conclusion—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7:30 o'clock p.m.

### PRAYERS.

### RESIGNATION OF ATTORNEY GENERAL. MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

#### STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Before the business of the House begins, I should like to inform hon. members that our old and esteemed friend, Mr. Burt, the member for the Ashburton, has to-day resigned his position in the Government as Attorney General. The reason for Mr. Burt's severance from the Ministry is solely on account of the many calls upon him in connection with his private business. It is well known to most people that for many years, I think I may say, the hon. member has desired to be relieved of the duties connected with his being a member of the Government; but, on my solicitation, urgent at times, he has from time to time deferred carrying his intention into effect, because I believe he thought that it would not only embarrass the Government, as it certainly would have done, but also that it would perhaps not be acceptable to the members of this House, and certainly would not be advantageous to the colony. But at length he found the duties were so great, and the calls on his time were so increasing, that there was no other course open to him but to ask me to relieve him of the important and onerous duties of Attorney General of this colony, and at length I have had to agree to meet his wishes. To-day his resignation has been presented to His Excellency the Governor, who has accepted it, and the hon. member for the Greenough (Mr. Pennefather) has been appointed

Attorney General of the colony. I think it is fitting, on an occasion like this, and it is certainly very agreeable to me, and I hope hon. members will not take any exception to it, that I should say a few words in regard to the hon. member who has, for so long a time, nearly seven years, occupied so prominent a position as a member of the Government and as a member of this House. Everyone will be in accord with me—the members on this side as well as the members on the other side of the House—that the retirement of Mr. Burt from the position of Attorney General will not only be a loss, as it certainly is in my opinion a great loss, to the Government, but it will also be a greater loss to this House and the people of this colony. We all know the high sense of duty and the high sense of right that actuates the hon. member in all his actions, in this House and outside of it. For myself, I may say that for nearly seven years the hon. member has been a wise councillor and a generous friend to me. I would like to say, too, of him, because I do not know that it is generally known throughout the country, and I who have been intimate with him and enjoyed his fullest confidence can say, that he has been foremost in supporting the progressive measures introduced by this Government; that, in regard to public works, he has been altogether in accord with myself in reference to the great works we have undertaken—the railways we have constructed, the Fremantle harbour works which we commenced and are carrying on at present, also in regard to that great work we have in contemplation and which we hope soon to begin, the Coolgardie water supply scheme, he was one of the strongest supporters I had when that was under consideration. Besides these great undertakings, he has been a firm supporter of all the public works we have inaugurated throughout the colony. I can scarcely call to mind any important work in regard to which he has not been in accord with me. Then, as to legislation, I may say the amendments of the Constitution Act, by the abolition of the property qualification for members elected to Parliament, by broadening the representation of the people and granting manhood suffrage, thus bringing our constitution into line with those of the other colonies, have

always had a strong advocate in the late Attorney General. If further evidence be necessary of the great work he has done in regard to the legislation of this colony, one need only to take down from the shelves those statute books, which show the number of Bills that have been introduced and passed through the Legislature from 1871 to the present time; and when we remember that nearly all those Bills, except a few introduced by private members, have been drafted by the late Attorney General, and which in all cases have had his care and supervision, I think it must be admitted that he has erected in this colony a monument in regard to legislation which it will be difficult for others to imitate or enjoy to a greater degree. I may add that Mr. Burt has agreed, at my urgent request, to continue a member of the Executive Council for a short time, in order to assist this House in regard to the various Bills that are before it, and especially in the absence of the hon. member for the Greenough, who will now have to seek re-election at the hands of his constituents. In regard to his successor, I may say he has a difficult position to fill: he has a difficult man to follow. A gentleman like our friend Mr. Burt, enjoying the confidence of members on both sides of the House, and enjoying the confidence of the people of the colony, is no easy man for anyone to follow. But I believe, and have every confidence, in the knowledge and energy of his successor; and I hope he will in time—it would be unreasonable to expect he should do it in one day or in one year—I hope that in time he, too, will enjoy that confidence which his predecessor has enjoyed in this House and throughout the country. I am glad, however, to know that although Mr. Burt has severed his connection with the Government, he does not intend to sever his connection with this House. He purposes still to retain his seat as member for the Ashburton; and hon. members, whether on this side of the House or on the opposite side, may depend upon it that his services will be always available in the best interests of this colony. I thank hon. members for allowing me to make these few observations in regard to the member for the Ashburton, because no one, I think, can appreciate the difficult position in which I have found myself in consequence of his desire to leave the

Government. He has certainly been the right hand of the Government for many years. He has had experience even before the year 1891, and his counsel and advice have been available to me and to every member of the Government. However, the inevitable has at length come to pass, and I can only say that, although the services of the hon. member will not be so completely or so readily available to the Government as they have been in the past, yet I feel sure he will always be willing to assist us to the utmost of his power. I beg to ask hon. members to agree to the suspension of the Standing Orders, to enable me to make a motion—"That the seat of the hon. member for Greenough be declared vacant, he having accepted an office of profit from the Crown." I beg to move now, that the Standing Orders be suspended, with the view of my proposing the motion.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Mr. Speaker, before this motion is put, I think hon. members will agree with me that a word or two are fitting from this side of the House in reference to the retirement of the Attorney General. I feel, sir, speaking personally, that the country is suffering a very great loss through the retirement of Mr. Burt, and that his place cannot possibly be filled with the same amount of ability as that with which it has been filled during the years that he has occupied that position. I am sure it is a matter of regret to myself and to the other members of this House that it should have become necessary for him, in his own private interest, to deprive the country of his services. I think we should take note, sir, at a time like this, of our indebtedness to a public man of his standing—a man whose ability and whose position are such as to render it difficult to fill his place, thus making his retirement a very great loss to the country. One thing, however, I feel personally: I feel that the appointment of a gentleman from Victoria is one step in the amalgamation of those who have come to this country and those who were born in it. When we remember that perhaps over 40,000 Victorians are in this country now, who are likely to be prominent residents in it, and who are endeavouring to help on its interests as well as their own, it seems to me natural that some of the sons of that colony

should take a place in the Government, and help us to carry on the business of this great colony. And while I have no doubt that I shall disagree, perhaps often, with the hon. member who has been appointed to the vacant position, that I may disagree with him in many things, as we have to agree or disagree in most things that come before this House, yet it is a pleasure to me to know that a Victorian has received an appointment in the Ministry. It seems to me that, now, we have come to the last man in the original Ministry. We have had seven Ministries during the last seven years, and now we have come to the last man. Of course, if this reconstruction policy goes on, it is possible for the right hon. the Premier to continue in office as long as Mr. McDonald did in Canada, and remain there for thirty-six years. Possibly it may be to the interest of the country for him so to remain; but, so long as he keeps adding to his Ministry the best talents he can secure, no doubt such a course will be to the interest of the Government, and to the interest of this country. I desire, sir, to express my very great regret that it should have been necessary for Mr. Burt to retire from the Ministry.

Question put and passed.

Standing Orders suspended.

#### SEAT DECLARED VACANT.

On a further motion by the PREMIER, the seat of the member for the Greenough was declared vacant, he having accepted an office of profit from the Crown.

#### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER:—Report of Victoria Public Library Committee for the year ending 30th June, 1897.

#### MOTION—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the member for Plantagenet, Mr. Hassell.

#### PUBLIC NOTARIES BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### DOG ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### SALE OF LIQUORS AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### CIRCUIT COURTS BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### EMPLOYMENT BROKERS BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### CEMETERIES BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### NOXIOUS WEEDS BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### MOTION—RETURN *RE* COMPARATIVE TARIFFS.

On the motion of Mr. ILLINGWORTH, the following return was granted:—  
Return.—1. Imports of Western Australia and Victoria in respect to each of the articles referred to in Parliamentary Paper No. 15 of 1897. 2. Local productions of said articles in the respective colonies. 3. Totals of imports and production. 4. Duty collectable by each of the respective colonies, assuming both imports and production were subject to the respective Tariff Acts. 5. Value of each and any of articles exported by the respective colonies. 6. Drawbacks allowed on same. 7. Drink Bill per head in the two colonies, if their respective tariffs were applied to the importations *plus* the production. 8. Food Bill ditto. 9. Drapery and clothing ditto. 10. Miscellaneous ditto. 11. The application of the tariff of Western Australia to the Victorian imports, and production under the heads 7, 8, 9, 10.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

## SIXTH DAY OF DEBATE—CONCLUSION.

[The amendment, moved by Mr. Leake, having been negatived on division at the previous sitting, the debate on general topics in the Governor's Speech (upon motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply) was resumed.]

MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay): Sir, In speaking to the Address-in-Reply, I desire, in the first instance, to say I am content to confine my remarks briefly to the various paragraphs contained in His Excellency's Speech. During the discussion on the amendment which was disposed of last night, I regret to say hon. members did not confine their remarks to the food duties, but some members dealt with generalities. I owe a duty to my constituents, because there are subjects contained in the Governor's Speech on which I am bound to express an opinion. I congratulate the Government on its policy, and on the progress which has been made in the goldfields throughout the colony. We have every reason to believe that that progress will continue. We all recognise that the goldfields are our best industry, and the greatest attraction to our shores. I fully believe that the hope of the Government will be realised, and that, as already stated by the hon. member for Coolgardie, our goldfields will prove the greatest in the world. Paragraph 6 of His Excellency's Speech refers to the erection of the Mint in Perth. Mints, I know, have not been payable undertakings in other parts of Australia, but, as we are a mineral country producing considerable quantities of gold, the Mint will be a good advertisement. I have no doubt the Mint will also be the means of causing at least some portion of the gold raised in this country being spent here. So far as the Coolgardie water scheme is concerned, I am glad to notice a motion on the paper at the instance of the hon. member for Central Murchison. I myself believe that the importance of the goldfields rests on the certainty of a permanent water supply, and, as to the best method, I think the proposal of the hon. member for Central Murchison is the most advisable. The undertaking is certainly a considerable one for this colony to face, in-

volving as it does an expenditure of some millions of money. Looking, however, at the price obtained for the precious fluid throughout the Coolgardie fields, I believe the scheme as proposed would be a thorough success. It would not only serve the goldfields, but the arid plains which lie between Perth and Coolgardie. Respecting Paragraph 9 of His Excellency's Speech, I entirely agree with the reference made therein to the success of the harbour works at Fremantle. These works are certainly a credit to the Government of the colony, and redound, I may also say, to the credit of the Engineer-in-Chief. The harbour works have already benefited commercial interests considerably, and I am sure they will continue to do so. In years past great dangers had to be contended with by the shipping at Fremantle. There also had to be faced the charges made owing to the danger arising from vessels lying in the then supposed harbour. As an instance of the benefits to be derived from the harbour works, I know to-day of a prominent firm of timber merchants who, so they tell me, in one shipment alone saved £400, owing to the facilities given to vessels to come close up to the wharf at Fremantle. In connection with paragraph 10, I hope that the railways now being constructed will be fully justified. In some instances I firmly believe they certainly will be justified. I hope a measure will be introduced during this session proposing a light line of railway from Toodyay to Mount Jackson, and other fields known not to be productive of very high-grade ore. I trust this line will meet with the approval of hon. members, for the reason that this scheme is not similar to others we have had to deal with before. For instance, there were the Great Southern Railway and the Midland Railway. We know how the colony has suffered in connection with those railways, but in the case of the Toodyay-to-Mount-Jackson railway, the proposal is altogether different. The idea is to merely grant the right to lay the line, giving the Government the right to purchase it at cost price, *plus* a reasonable rate of interest added, at any time. Such a line would be the means of opening up a valuable tract of country, and would ensure the permanent employment of an immense body of people in

places where water could be obtained for the purpose of dealing with low-grade ores. I trust there will be little delay in the construction of the Goomalling railway. This line will be the means of giving facilities to many who, out in that part of the colony, have borne the heat and burden of the day for many years past. It would open up a very good country; in many places some of the very best country for settlement. The purchase of the Great Southern Railway is in itself a proof of the advisability of the Government acquiring as early as possible the concession granted to the Midland Company. This concession has retarded settlement, not only in the eastern districts, but in the northern portions of the colony, and it is well-known that the only means of obtaining land from the company who got that concession is by lease. People are unable to purchase the freehold, and it behoves the Government, in the interests of land settlement, to direct their attention as early as they conveniently can to the acquiring of the concession, which, I am sorry to say, has done so much injury to the colony. In regard to paragraph 15, I entirely agree with the necessity and advisability of boring in different portions of the colony. It is especially necessary in the various farming districts of the east, where, I am sorry to say, our colony is not so well supplied as other colonies are with water. One thing at least we require is some provision by artesian means, seeing that we have no natural water resources in those parts. I am glad, indeed, to know that it is intended to introduce, amongst other things, some measure dealing with the land regulations. I am sure such a measure will be fairly received at the hands of hon. members, as indeed would any measure tending to liberalise the land laws of the colony. Any measure having for its object the putting of the land laws in a more concise form will, I am sure, meet with the hearty approval of the House. I would have liked to see amongst other measures proposed—Bills for the amendment of the Municipalities Act, for the amendment of the Health Act, and for the amendment of the Building Act. It is notorious that these three Acts are greatly in need of amendment. Municipalities, and Perth in particular, have

suffered for want of an Act, and if the Government do not introduce measures in the direction I have indicated, it will be the duty of private members to initiate some such legislation. I entirely agree that everything should be done that can be done to assist the pastoral producer. For that purpose I will be a strong advocate for the establishment of freezing works in the Northern portion of the colony, and likewise the establishment of a distributing centre. The necessity for assistance to pastoralists must be apparent, seeing the difficulties in the way of bringing stock overland, or even by vessel, from the Northern portions of the colony. The establishment of such works as I have indicated would tend to reduce the cost of the article to the consumer, and would be the means of giving to pastoralists a more convenient market. I quite agree with the Government in their expressions in paragraph 21, wherein they propose not to raise any more money by loan. We ought to be steady in borrowing money, and ought not to follow the footsteps of the other colonies in this respect.

MR. VOSPER: We will not get the chance.

MR. QUINLAN: I, at least, hope not. At any rate the members on this side of the House can act as a curb on the Government. Borrowing wisely is a proper course to adopt. There is a time, however, for all things, and certainly the Government have suffered a check just now, seeing they were not successful in raising the loan recently asked for in London. I am glad to be able to indorse what is said in the Speech in respect to the success of the Agricultural Bank. It has done considerable good throughout the farming districts. I am glad to say that in the Northam district the bank is very largely availed of. Northam itself is a proof of what settlement can do. The progress of that and other places throughout the eastern districts may be attributed in a great measure to the railway facilities which have been afforded, and to the encouragement given by the Agricultural Bank. I hope the day is not far distant when the Government will see the advisability of introducing into this colony the system known as the Credit Foncier. It has already been ac-

cepted in Victoria and has proved a success, and I am confident it will be so in this colony. So far the disadvantages the agriculturists labour under in being unable to obtain money at a reasonable rate are very great. It is well-known that banking and financial institutions are not too well impressed with country property, and certainly are not liberal in their loans. The introduction of this system would meet a demand which is most needed in this colony, and would likewise encourage settlement and improve the public estate. It has recently been introduced in Tasmania, or rather is about to be introduced there, as I see by the telegrams, and it is known that it has been in existence in France for the past 50 years or more. Surely, therefore, it is not too much to ask the Government to favourably consider the advisability of introducing such a system into this colony. I said in my opening remarks I should be brief, but I felt it my duty to make these observations and to confine myself to questions outside the one which has been occupying the attention of the House for the past few days. It has been so thoroughly debated that I need scarcely say, and hon. members must recognise the fact, that it has taken the interest out of the Address-in-Reply. It has been the topic of the day throughout the length and breadth of the land. I am glad indeed to see that the question has been agreeably settled. Before concluding I would like, as one who had the honour of a seat in the first Parliament under Responsible Government in this colony, to indorse the kindly remarks of my right hon. friend the Premier, and the hon. member for Central Murchison, in regard to our worthy and much-respected Attorney General. I have known Mr. Burt during my lifetime, and I have always recognised in him a gentleman and a man of considerable ability. I regret indeed that he has thought fit to sever his connection with the Ministry, and I am sure it is not only a loss to the Government, but a loss to the colony in general. I desire to thank hon. members for the kindly manner in which they have listened to me. I know the subject before the House is not the most pleasing, but I hope it will receive some further consideration at the hands of hon. members.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie): The hon. member who has just sat down has been good enough to express his approval of the Fremantle harbour works. I am glad to learn that he approves of it, but at the same time I think his expression of approval is to a great extent supererogatory. It reminds me of the remark made by a somewhat celebrated man to the reporters on his arrival at New York. "I approve," said he, "of the Atlantic Ocean." I notice with amusement, coupled with respect for the hon. member's audacity, his suggestions with respect to the construction of a railway from Newcastle in the direction of Mount Jackson. His argument was that refractory ores, by being brought to Newcastle, would be considerably benefited thereby. That scheme might be carried, I think, a little further. Mount Jackson is no great distance from Lake Barlee, and if the railway were extended there it might open up the salt deposits. The one suggestion is just as sensible as the other. The hon. gentleman was kind enough to state, in the course of his remarks, that I was one of those persons who appeared to be entirely careless as to what the policy of this country might be. That remark, coming from a gentleman situated as the hon. member is, savours to a great extent of the pride of purse, and he might have omitted it from his otherwise excellent and eloquent oration. [MR. QUINLAN: It went home.] Rude remarks have a tendency to go home, occasionally, but that does not save them from being extremely rude. I don't think it is right of anyone in this House to accuse a member of not having a sufficient interest in the country. I claim to be as patriotic as the hon. gentleman or as any other hon. member in this House. There are two classes of men in a colony like this who may be said to have a stake in the country. One is the man of property who can manage to dispose of it, and the other is the man who has nothing and is obliged to remain here. I contend that the poor man is far more interested in the country than the wealthy man. No one should twit me with my poverty, seeing that, if I had chosen to pursue courses which have been followed by some other people, I might not have been poor. With reference to the Governor's Speech, I congratulate the House and the Govern-

ment on having got rid of the amendment. We had a long debate, the result of which was that the victory rests with the Government, while the profit rests with the Opposition. Hon. members on this side of the House will be willing to concede to the Government all the honour, so long as the Government will give them all the profit as outlined by the promise made by the right hon. gentleman opposite. In paragraph 5 the colony is congratulated on the way in which the goldfields are progressing, and certainly that progress is of a most gratifying character. I would like to say that, in certain respects, the Government might do something to materially accelerate that rate of progress. Take the question of exemptions, for example. I was informed by the Minister of Mines recently that the exemption this year would be very much shorter than on previous occasions. I think that is decidedly a step in the right direction, but I must complain that, whether it be due to the Minister or to the wardens, there are far too many exemptions granted in various parts of the colony. I think that the recent change in the labour conditions has given a very great amount of relief to capitalists and others. They will always avail themselves of the law to the greatest possible extent, and, having done so, I do not think they ought to have exemptions which tend to paralyse industry and lessen the gold returns. I know there are many mines which have been held under exemption for a long time, owing to the peculiar manipulations of financiers in London, which mines are shown now to be capable of being worked at a profit. The North Burges—not very far from Coolgardie—had a  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -years exemption; finally the mine was worked and crushings have yielded from 5 to 60zs. to the ton. Another example is that of the King Solomon, of Coolgardie. It was fooled with for the past four years, till at last the original company dwindled down to one man, by whom it is now held. He is a man of enterprise and energy, and is desirous of getting his profit out of the mine instead of out of the market, as his predecessors endeavoured to do. This mine is now turning out excellent stone, and the crushings have given  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. to the ton. That is an example of what can be done if the companies only care to do it. Such

a long exemption should never have been allowed. Of course, companies get into difficulties, largely due, I think, to the way in which the mines are managed; and I do not think that, because a company mismanages its affairs and fools away its money in useless expenditure, it should be entitled to consideration at the hands of the Government. There is one mine, the Britannia, at Hannan's, which is employing two men underground at £7 per week, a general manager at £10 per week, an overseer at £6 a week, and a clerk at £4 a week; that is to say, three men are employed to manage two, and three times as much is paid for management as for the working. Various mines I know of throughout the colony, that are held under exemption, are capable of being worked at a profit. I have a specimen stone here, showing gold, taken by a friend of mine from a mine in my own electorate, which has been under exemption for nine months. I do not wish to reproach the Government with this state of things, but it would be well if the Government were to appoint someone to act as a ranger or inspector, so that if companies wanted further concessions, the Government might send their inspector up to examine the condition of the mine and report to the warden, before the exemption was granted. I have always maintained that the labour conditions are practically part of the rental, and that the country is entitled to have these conditions carried out. I am speaking, not only for the protection of the working miner, but for the protection of the country as well. I think that if some such system were adopted it would be a good thing for the country, and would increase the number of working mines and also materially increase the gold output. I notice that a motion has been already set down with reference to the Coolgardie water supply. It is not my desire in any way to anticipate that motion. I may say, however, that I have been an opponent of that scheme, not because I did not recognise that a scheme of some kind was required, but it seemed to me that that particular scheme was not the best that could be devised. But, as I have said before in this House, one thing is obvious to everyone on the goldfields—water must be obtained from somewhere and in very large quantities; and, speaking at the present moment, as

far as I can see, the water supply project which the right hon. the Premier has fathered seems to fulfil those ends. I am not ashamed to change my opinions when I am convinced of the necessity of so doing. I simply say that I am inclined to give a general support to this scheme of the Government, but it is possible to assist the people at the goldfields very materially by subsidiary schemes. I put a question to the right hon. the Premier the other night, asking him if he intended to carry out surveys of the salt lakes, and I mentioned that the survey of those lakes would furnish a lot of very valuable data to the Water Supply Department, and supply the means by which that department could be very materially assisted. In a paragraph taken from the *Norseman Miner* about two months ago, Lake Cowan is described as being, in a good season, an enormous sheet of water, some 70 miles in extent; and the writer goes on to speak of the great extent of storage capacity which such a sheet of water affords for mining purposes, by simply cutting a drain from it to tap the supply. If it is possible to do that with a drain that is somewhat under a mile long, a very large portion of that water might be utilised as a regular source of supply, by improved means of conserving the rainfall. I know there are other sites on the goldfields capable of storing hundreds of thousands of gallons. It is being discovered that the rainfall on our goldfields is much larger than is generally supposed. [THE PREMIER: Not this year.] Taking one year with another, as the official report states, the average rainfall is 5 inches, but I know that at Kunowna last year it was over 12 inches. There would be no harm in ascertaining—and, in urging this matter, I do not ask the Government to undertake any great expenditure—whether it is not possible to save some portion of the rainfall on the goldfields. I think it can be done, and it is the duty of the Government to find out whether it can be done or not. I think I am right in assuming that one cause of the opposition to this water supply scheme of the Government, from this (the Opposition) side of the House, is not any desire to be captious critics or to throw out the scheme because it is propounded by the Government, but it is a desire, on the part of Northern mining

members more particularly, to secure the concession of some kind of water supply for their districts, and I for one shall be willing to assist them. I hope that when the motion of the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) comes before the House, the Premier will be able to give some assurance that the Murchison district shall be treated on equality with the Coolgardie district. I do not think the hon. member asks for two or three millions to be spent there; but the claim that some money should be expended there for that purpose is, I think, deserving of the earnest consideration of the Government. I would like to congratulate the Ministry on their promise to bring in a Bill for the further restriction of undesirable immigrants. I have repeatedly stated, on the platform and in the press, my views on the matter, and I hope to express them more fully when the Bill comes before this House. We have proofs, unfortunately, that the influx of aliens is continuing, and it is estimated that, as far as the goldfields are concerned, there are from 1,500 to 2,000 Afghans located in Coolgardie alone. If that is so, they are capable of doing a serious amount of injury; for their religious and social ideas being entirely foreign to ours, the presence of so large an alien population is a menace and an inconvenience to us. I regret that the number is continually increasing, and I am aware there are firms in this colony who are bringing aliens here in increasing numbers, in a manner that does not attract attention. I have here a letter from Geraldton, which mentions that forty coloured pests—so they are described in the letter—had just arrived there; and the writer goes on to make some remarks in regard to my own position on the question. I think these facts should be known, and steps be taken to put an end to this kind of immigration, or minimise it as far as possible. I also wish to congratulate the Government on the fact that they have decided upon establishing circuit courts. I have not yet perused the provisions of the Bill introduced this evening, but I hope the circuit courts will extend to the goldfields as well as to country districts, and that this system will much reduce the expenses of litigants living on the goldfields. We have had an



extraordinary state of things on the goldfields, for at Coolgardie, for instance, the warden has been sitting at the preliminary hearing of a case, afterwards sitting as a grand jury at the next stage of the case, and finally sitting as chairman of quarter sessions to try the case. I do not think any one man should hold these several positions in relation to the same case. I have not seen any instance in which the system has worked well, and I hope the measure for establishing circuit courts will receive the support of both sides of the Houses. I notice also that a Workmen's Lien Bill is promised; and if it takes the form of an Act similar to one which has just passed in the old country, it will prove of advantage. The Speech does not make any reference to trades unions and provision in case of labour disputes. I have put a question to the Government on that point, and have received a reply of a negative character from the Premier. I regret that this should be the case, because I believe in the axiom that the best way to secure peace is to be prepared for war. We know we have a large working population growing in the colony, and especially on the goldfields, a large wage-earning population and a large representation of capital; and if a large labour strike occurred on the goldfields, the results might be disastrous to all concerned. I think that in a time of industrial peace we can deal more calmly and carefully with industrial questions, such as arise in labour disputes, than we can expect to be able to do during an exciting struggle, when we may be moved by class prejudice to wrong or extreme conclusions. It is easy to say we ought to "let sleeping dogs lie," but sleeping dogs do not sleep for ever, and if we can provide for these disputes before they take place, we shall save expense and prevent loss, and probably do a vast deal of good to the working class. I think it will be the duty of some private member—possibly myself—to introduce a Bill dealing with the matter; and although the Government have thought fit to ignore this question, it will not be treated by me on party lines, and I hope that such a Bill will have the support of every member who values the blessings of industrial peace. Paragraph 18 of the Speech refers to the erection of public batteries on

goldfields, but the paragraph varies a good deal from what the Premier promised in his election speech at Bunbury, for at that time he was most emphatic on the question of private enterprise having failed in many instances, saying that where it had failed for the small man, the Premier was prepared to erect a public battery. In the last session a similar statement was made in this House. But now the Speech informs us that these public batteries are to be erected only in certain localities. It appears to me the counsels of the Minister of Mines have prevailed, and the result is that we are to have erected batteries only where they are a long distance from existing batteries. I know that where batteries exist at present, the prospectors are more or less the victim of the battery owners. One instance was made public lately in which over 600oz. of gold were taken off the plates, which gold had been accumulating for a long time, and that gold was all taken off the stone sent in by private prospectors. This does not give confidence to prospectors. I think it is the duty of the Government to erect public batteries where they are needed, irrespective of the question of distance.

THE PREMIER: We are going to give £50,000, as it is.

MR. VOSPER: I say you should not make an unwise or unjust distinction between places that are isolated and places that are not. In a place that is isolated and unproved, it may be a risky thing to erect a battery; whereas in a place that has already batteries erected, and where a large number of "shows" have been partly proved, there is an assurance that such will be a payable place to erect a public battery. In places around Kanowna the leases show thousands of tons of stone lying on the surface awaiting treatment, and these are the places where public batteries should be erected. I think batteries should be placed where they are wanted, and not simply because the place happens to be isolated. I have also to congratulate the Government on the proposed measure for establishing free education in the schools. This is one of the wisest legislative steps the present Government have taken, and I am sure members on this side of the House will heartily applaud the Government for having promised to introduce the measure, and

will also give it their best support. I think I have indulged in what may be termed almost a chorus of congratulations to the Government, and perhaps it is about time to begin to find fault a little. I do not like finding fault, and I am quite sure the hon. gentlemen on the opposite side will say I have no particular gift for doing it. I wish to say one or two words in reference to postal administration. Everyone knows the management of the Post Office has been materially improved during recent years. The state of chaos and inefficiency into which that department had drifted some few years ago has been largely remedied. Whether the credit is due to the present or immediately preceding Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, or to the efforts of Mr. Sholl, the Postmaster General, I do not know; but there are still some things that need remedying. Frequently letters continue to go astray. They do not go astray now-a-days by the bagful, as they used to do, but still there are instances in which this sort of thing occurs. Some two months ago I wrote a letter from this House to the Hon. H. G. Parsons, a member of the Legislative Council. That gentleman, as most people are aware, is also the mayor of Kalgoorlie—one of the most important of the goldfields towns; and the letter was sent on to Mr. Parsons at Kalgoorlie, and about two days ago was sent back to me through the dead-letter office. During the whole of that time Mr. Parsons had never been absent from Kalgoorlie. If a person of the prominence of Mr. Parsons cannot be found in the colony, it is very difficult to see how the ordinary man would get on at that rate. I earnestly recommend such an instance as that to the consideration of the Minister of Education, and trust that he may be able to find a remedy. I saw Mr. Sholl on the point the other day, and he told me that he would investigate the matter. I hope all cases of the same kind will be thoroughly looked into, and that we will have our post office established on a more efficient basis than it is at the present moment. I regret that the Speech contains no reference to the necessity of establishing something different from what exists at the present time as regards prison discipline. I have asked a question on that point also, and have received an

assurance from the Premier that the matter has been under the consideration of the late Attorney General. Whether the appointment of Mr. Pennefather will make any difference to its consideration I do not know, but I do think that if that gentleman desires to cover himself with credit on his first entrance to office, he cannot do it better than take up some of the crying evils which at the present time characterise our system of prison administration. But the Premier told me also that the tendency of the Attorney General's investigations was rather towards making the system more severe than it had been in the past. I have no sympathy with crime or with criminals, and no objection to the present system being made more severe than it is at present, provided the severity is imposed on something like rational lines. The great fault I find with prison discipline in this colony is that it is rather too lax in some respects, and a great deal too severe in others. There is, in to-day's papers, an account of the arrest of a man who escaped from the Fremantle gaol, and I suppose in a few days this colony will be again disgraced by the application of the lash. We should have our prison system so arranged that men cannot escape, or, if they do, the escape should be clearly traceable to some fault on the part of the system. I earnestly trust that the Government will see their way clear to do something; and that, even if they make the prison regulations more severe than at present, they will make them a little more sensible and secure, so that the law-abiding people of the colony may not be menaced by the escape of convicts, and the convicts' natures may not be brutalised by the application of the lash in remedying the defects, not of the individual, but of the system. On the question of hospital administration I should like to say something. I have here a letter addressed to me by a medical man residing in Coolgardie, to which is attached a sub-leader from the columns of the *Coolgardie Miner*, and this makes a complaint concerning a man who was stated to be sickening for fever. [Extract read.] This article goes on to give at some length a description of the way in which this man was treated, and this is fully confirmed by a letter from the

medical gentleman referred to, and I am prepared to show this letter to any member of the Government. I cannot read it to the House, because it is a private letter.

**THE PREMIER:** My information is that the man was wealthy; and the hospitals are meant for the poor, not for the rich. I have read the article, and it seemed to me there was not much in it.

**MR. VOSPER:** As far as I can understand, this man was actually a pauper.

**THE PREMIER:** The letter I saw was to the effect that he was a man of some means.

**MR. VOSPER:** If that is the case, it will alter the matter; but the other day I met a man in Perth who told me that he had applied to the Perth Hospital for admission when suffering from a severe internal disease. He had been on the goldfields for some time, and was ordered by his medical adviser to visit the eastern colonies for the benefit of his health. He went there, but spent all his means in obtaining medical advice, and finally came back to this colony, where he found himself without means; and, on presenting himself at the Perth hospital, he was told his case was an incurable one, and that he could not, under the circumstances, be admitted there. Luckily he found some sympathisers, who sent him back to his friends in an eastern colony, where he might hope to get proper treatment. But I think it is an inhuman thing that a man in that position should be turned away from such a public institution as the Perth hospital.

**THE PREMIER:** It is managed by a public board, and is not under the Government.

**MR. VOSPER:** I should be inclined to think it is governed, not by a board, but by a stone. It must be some of the colony's hardwoods of which the board is composed. Also, I may say that some little time ago there was a dispute in connection with the Fremantle hospital. There was some talk of investigation, and there were several very serious allegations made about the want of discipline. I do think there should be some kind of public investigation, and that the matter should be sifted thoroughly. So far as I know, nothing has been done yet, and the grievance remains as it was. At the same

time I do not think the Government would gain anything by tinkering with isolated instances of this kind. What is required is to have some regular system set forth in the nature of an Act of Parliament for the government and maintenance of the whole of the hospitals throughout the colony. The responsibility could then be always placed on the right shoulders; therefore I respectfully recommend to the Government the necessity of devising some means by which the hospitals of this colony may be properly governed. I have nothing further to say.

**THE PREMIER:** You mean some scheme by which the public shall be made to contribute a little more.

**MR. VOSPER:** If the right hon. gentleman can devise any scheme of that kind, the House will be glad to support him to any extent.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Every one contributes, when it comes out of the revenue.

**MR. VOSPER:** I need say no more on the Address-in-Reply, and I should not have spoken at all upon it but for the fact that it is necessary to bring forward small grievances at this time that cannot be brought forward at any other time. I trust the recommendations I have made will be taken in the kindly spirit in which they are intended, and that they will have the result of introducing some useful legislation on the subjects referred to.

**MR. MORGANS:** In reference to the Coolgardie water scheme, I desire to take the opportunity of asking the Premier one question. Referring to paragraph 8 of the Speech, in which this matter is mentioned, although it is clear that the Government approve of this scheme and intend to carry it out—so they say, and I fully believe they do—I should like to know if the right hon. gentleman is in a position at the present time to give this House any information as to the time he proposes to make a commencement with this very important work. I think the House has been convinced of the necessity of this undertaking, and I understand, from what the right hon. gentleman told us a few days ago, that there is a French firm ready to undertake this work, and to relieve the Government of all financial responsibility in respect of it. If this is so, and if the Premier has confidence in the solidity of the proposal which has been made by this firm, I shall be glad to

hear from him, and I am sure it will be a source of gratification to the country if we can have some opinion expressed by the right hon. gentleman in reference to the views of the Government on this offer. I desire also to state that I have been requested by a very strong combination of capitalists in London to propose to this Government a plan for carrying out this scheme, and providing the whole of the money for it, if the Government so desire. I think that, in view of the fact that we are all convinced—and I am glad to say that all of my friends on this side of the House are quite convinced, of the necessity of this scheme, and what appeared to them the principal difficulty was the financial one—in view of the fact that we have this important French firm, and the other firm in London who have authorised me to provide the Government with the whole of these funds if they require them to carry out the work—I have not mentioned this fact to the right hon. gentleman before—I believe that every friend of mine on this side of the House will agree that the commencement of this great work should not present any further difficulties.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Will they do it at their own risk?

MR. MORGANS: I am not prepared to state to the House the conditions on which my friends have authorised me to make this proposal. But I understand this important French firm have offered to carry out the work, taking all the risk upon themselves. If that be so, there cannot be any reasonable excuse for further delay. My friend, the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), has to some extent been a phantom before my mind in reference to this water scheme, and I am bound to say I noticed with much regret that the hon. gentleman is determined to bring a motion before this House, which I fear has for its object the delaying of this important work. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: No.] I am glad to hear him say that that is not so. The particular object to which I have referred appears to me to be sticking out of that motion,

A MEMBER: He wants his own water scheme.

MR. MORGANS: The proposal of the hon. member to have a select committee of this House appointed for the purpose of enquiring into this scheme—

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is not this scheme. It is a scheme for the whole of the colony.

MR. MORGANS: I am sorry to say that is still worse, from my point of view. At any rate, he proposes the appointment of a committee which would necessarily have to report upon this scheme, as well as upon others, and this means an interminable delay in the carrying out of this important work. I have asked the hon. member for Central Murchison when he intends to bring his motion before the House, and he very properly tells me he is not able to say when. I believe he will not be able to bring the motion on until the debate on the Address-in-Reply is over. When the hon. member does bring forward his motion, I intend to be here to offer it every possible opposition. I would travel from one end of the colony to the other in order to oppose it. My great point, however, is to ask the Premier as to whether he intends to allow this debate to be carried on in relation to the Coolgardie water scheme any further. I understand this scheme has already been passed by this House. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] If so, I do not see how any question in regard to it can be raised now.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Estimates are not passed.

MR. MORGANS: But the House has approved of the scheme, and it seems to me a waste of time to debate it further.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The debate would not delay the scheme a month.

MR. DOHERTY: A select committee would.

MR. MORGANS: At any rate, I take it the measure has been passed by the House, and I sincerely trust the Government will not permit any interference with a matter which has already received the approval of Parliament. The hon. member for North-East Coolgardie has referred to the rainfall on the goldfields, and has stated that it is seven to nine inches per annum at Kanowna. From information I have received I believe that in certain parts of the goldfields that is the rainfall, but the fact remains that, during the whole of the year, the rainfall in Coolgardie has been less than three inches from January to the present time.

MR. VOSPER: Coolgardie is the driest place on the fields.

MR. MORGANS: I do not know about that. I think I could point out two or three drier places on the fields. At any rate it has been a little drier in Coolgardie than in Kalgoorlie. In the latter place the rainfall has been  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches for the year.

MR. DOHERTY: There are plenty of drier places than Kanowna.

MR. MORGANS: I am sorry to say there are. With the example of Coolgardie before us, it would be a grievous mistake on the part of the Government to depend on the rainfall for the supply of the goldfields with water.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I did not say the Government should depend on the rainfall.

MR. MORGANS: I did not say you said so. I was simply referring to the small rainfall. The Afghans have been referred to by the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie, and I am able to indorse all that he has said. I am convinced there has been a great deal of carelessness on the part of the authorities in the colony in allowing these people to enter the country. It is a fact that at the present time there are more than 2,000 Asiatic aliens in Coolgardie. The other day I heard with regret, from an authority which is indisputable, that the Afghans on the field are at the present time collecting money and remitting it to Afghanistan, in order to oppose the British imperial forces, who are now shedding their blood in the imperial cause on the frontier. That supplies another good reason for not allowing these men in our colony. Their presence on the goldfields has certainly had the effect of reducing wages, which I look upon as a very deplorable circumstance and fact. The time has come when the Government should take some serious step to prevent the entry of those aliens into the colony. It should not only be made difficult for Afghans to come here. They should be absolutely prevented from entering the colony of Western Australia.

MR. DOHERTY: What would you do with those aliens who are already?

MR. MORGANS: Those aliens who are in we must treat kindly and properly. It is our duty to do that. I do not think we have any right to order out those Afghans who are already in the country. Those who are here we must deal with in

a proper spirit. But there are other evils on the Coolgardie goldfields that might be cured. There is there a certain French combination who have introduced women into this colony under circumstances which are discreditable to them, and which will certainly bring shame on this country. I should be glad to see some measures taken to prevent such scandals. I will not refer to this matter any further now, except to say that it is one which deserves the attention of the Government. I am entirely in accord with the erection of public batteries, and I sincerely hope we shall see the policy carried out at an early date. What the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie said is quite true. It is not only in remote districts that these public batteries are required. There are many important places on the fields, in the very centre of the best gold-producing parts, where these batteries would be more useful than in any remote district. I am quite content to leave this matter in the hands of the Government, who, I believe, will take the necessary steps to provide themselves with proper information before they erect any batteries. It was wise, however, on the part of the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie to call the attention of the Government to this point. What I want to ask the Premier is when he proposes to commence the erection of the public batteries. I should like to know whether any steps have been taken already for the purpose of looking out sites for public batteries, and also when it is likely we shall see the first half dozen erected on the fields. I am perfectly certain the Premier will give great satisfaction to prospectors and working miners on the goldfields, if he can only give this House and the country some information on this very important subject.

MR. EWING: Sir, it is almost necessary, after the long debate that has taken place, to offer some apology for speaking at all, but I think my excuse will lie in the importance of the matter to which I wish to address myself this evening. I notice from paragraph 17 of His Excellency's Speech that it is intended by the Government to introduce legislation with the object of establishing circuit courts in the goldfields and the outlying districts of the colony. I presume that deter-

mination arises from the fact that the Government have realised that the administration of justice, so far as the outlying districts are concerned, is highly unsatisfactory. Such a course as that proposed by the Government appears to me absolutely necessary. Every member of this House knows that the manner in which justice, both civil and criminal, as administered here is in the highest degree improper. In the first place, the magistrate sits as a court of inquiry to ascertain whether a man shall be committed for trial or not. In the next place, if the magistrate commit the man for trial, in many cases the magistrate is called upon to decide whether the case is a fit one to be prosecuted by the Crown. And then, in the next place, the magistrate may be called upon to sit at the trial as chairman of court of sessions. That is a state of affairs not at all satisfactory, and it is a sad thing to think that the liberty of the subject in Western Australia may depend on the determination of gentlemen who, in many cases, are laymen in the law. We know that the gentlemen who occupy these positions are in most cases, if not in all, gentlemen of integrity; but the fact remains that the absence of legal qualifications renders them unfit for the performance of the duties devolving upon them. It appears to me that the Government have fully realised this when they announce their intention of establishing circuit courts. This new departure means that proper judicial authorities must visit the outlying districts of the colony. I suppose it is intended to appoint a judge to go on circuit, and another judge for the Supreme Court. [THE PREMIER: I do not know.] I did not quite catch whether the Premier falls in with that suggestion.

THE PREMIER: I said I do not know anything about it.

MR. EWING: If it is not intended to appoint another judge to the Supreme Court, I am perfectly certain that the present judges will be unable to visit the goldfields in the manner required. The only satisfactory way would be to establish district court judges, in accordance with the principle approved of in other colonies, where the plan has worked well. Those district court judges should have a civil jurisdiction, and should sit as a court of appeal from magistrates and wardens, thus saving the heavy expense

of bringing appeals to Perth. They should also act as chairman of quarter sessions in the various districts they visit. That is the plan which has worked satisfactorily in the other colonies, and I believe would work well here. I submit these views to the Government with all respect, and I hope I may not be looked upon as presuming. I regard the plan I have suggested as the only way of enabling justice to be administered, in the districts where the causes of action arise, by proper judicial authorities. It would enable men on their trial to have the satisfactory knowledge that the proceedings were conducted by men who have a knowledge of the law, and who are able to direct the jury as to their duty. I trust, if the Government intend to establish circuit courts, they will do so in such a way as to wipe out the evils which exist at the present time in connection with the administration of justice in the country. Before I resume my seat I have a formal amendment to propose, the sole object of which is to enable the leader of the Opposition to address the House on His Excellency's Speech, if he so desires. I move "That the last clause of the Address-in-Reply be struck out."

MR. SIMPSON formally seconded the motion.

THE SPEAKER (after a pause): I cannot accept such an amendment as that.

MR. CONOLLY (Dundas): Speaking to the Address-in-Reply, I would express first my regret that, although a promise has been made that the Government will take some action during the next session to provide certain places on the goldfields with better transport facilities, yet no specific statement has been made with reference to a railway from the Southern to the Northern fields. The Southern fields have for a long time had a requisition before the Government for a railway, and I have received from the Railway League of that district a telegram as follows:—"The people of Dundas district regret that the right honourable the Premier has not seen fit to provide in the Government programme for the introduction of a Bill for giving railway communication to the Norseman, and desire once more to urge on the right honourable the Premier and the Government the urgent necessity of carrying out this work." I may say that this requi-

sition has been for a long time before the Government, and that probably no goldfield in Western Australia has laboured under greater disadvantages from the very earliest period than the Dundas and Norseman fields. Other fields in their early stages have had alluvial gold to assist their development, and few places have had such arduous obstacles to contend with in the supply of their requirements. Certainly the Dundas fields are only 100 miles from the sea coast, and there are no fields which could more easily, or with less cost, be supplied with railway facilities; but up to the present moment the Government have done nothing in this respect, except by spending public money on a road. They have also spent much money in endeavouring to metal this road. It is very obvious to anybody who knows the intermediate country, that to endeavour to overcome this difficulty by metalling is nothing more nor less than throwing money away. It would be cheaper to the country, and more beneficial to the people, if, instead of spending this money in metalling, proper railway facilities were given to these promising goldfields. It is a matter which appeals to anybody who has seen this country; and, after all, it would not be asking the Government to do any more than they have done for many other places which do not offer more justification for such an expenditure. It is needless to say, as I think most hon. members of this House know, that if the Government will not carry this work out, there are numerous offers from private companies who will be only too willing to do this work. We do not ask the Government specially to do it. If they have not the money to expend on it, why will they not let others do it? Why should they discourage private enterprise by not allowing these people to develop the country, and thereby to increase the revenue of the colony? The construction of the proposed line would lead to the development of a district which has for a long time been wanting a railway to develop it, and it would materially assist, not only a prosperous mining district, but also a very prosperous farming district as well. It has certainly been argued that to develop this southern port would be to open it to the trade of the eastern colonies. I beg leave to deny

this. The port which the Norseman fields require opened to them would not in any way open up a trade with the eastern colonies more than any other port at the present moment in Western Australia. Take any port on the west coast, and it will invariably be found that the largest amount of shipping and imports comes from the eastern colonies. So far from increasing the trade of the eastern colonies, the opening up of this southern port would encourage the enterprise and energies of the people on the south coast to enter into agricultural enterprise. They have already done so to a certain extent, and the honourable members who visited there recently saw results that were most excellent, and, in fact, they were of such a nature that, if the least encouragement were given to the inhabitants, they would embark very considerably in agricultural and pastoral enterprise, and by so doing would not only supply the Dundas and Norseman fields, but would emancipate the people there from the importations of the eastern colonies. We might look forward to seeing such immediate results follow the construction of the line I am advocating. There would be a very large reduction in the amount of importations which at the present time are coming through that port. It would encourage the enterprise and labours of people who have settled there, and are willing to make this colony their home, and to cultivate and produce on land which is at present lying useless. I might also mention that the Government have spent some money in erecting condensers in that district, which the people there fully appreciate. In addition, I can only say that I very sincerely hope that the right hon. the Premier and the Government will see their way clear at a very early date to do something substantial for the assistance of the people on the Southern goldfields. I would also mention that I think it would be advisable for Western Australia if some legislation were introduced with reference to the rabbits which at the present time are coming along from South Australia. I think there are very few people in this colony who are aware of the rapidity with which these rabbits are encroaching into this colony. If this colony wishes to eradicate a great trouble, which has

overwhelmed the pastoral and farming industries of the eastern colonies, they cannot take this question up too early or with too much energy; and I hope that before the encroachment of these rabbits continues any further, the Government will take steps to prevent it, either by fencing or by any other means which may be considered advisable. I would also like to bring under the notice of the Government the necessity of taking some steps to light the southern coast. At the present moment this coast, which is probably the most stony and one of the roughest coasts in Australia, is entirely without lighthouses right away from Eucla to Albany. More especially is this noticeable as you pass from the South Australian coast, which is well lighted. After passing that coast and coming to the West Australian coast, there is not a landmark of any kind to guide steamers or to assist navigation.

**MR. DOHERTY:** The accidents all happen on the other side.

**MR. CONOLLY:** I do not know that they do, and I think that the proportion of accidents is greater on the Western Australian coast than on any other. [**MR. DOHERTY:** Not on record.] I hope the Government will at an early date introduce legislation for the revision of the Electoral Act. It is a question which cannot be taken up too soon, as under the present system the mining industry is placed at a great disadvantage. I do not think that the miners—owing to their occupation, which leads them to pass from one district to another a great deal more than the agricultural population—are fairly dealt with. I consider that, taking the generality of miners, they are quite as capable of exercising the franchise intelligently as any other class in this colony. Many of them have been here three or four years, and, because they have been unable to remain for a certain length of time in one district, they have been entirely disfranchised. I hope that the miners may be placed on the same equitable footing as their brothers in the farming industry. I do not wish to detain the House any longer, except to hope that, with all good-will to other districts and to honourable members representing the interests of other people, this Government and honourable members on both sides of the House will remember that

the people of the Dundas district have for some considerable time been neglected, and I hope that honourable members will assist one another in trying to further the endeavours which these people have, by their enterprise and energy, initiated for the development of a large district.

**THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest):** I had not purposed to speak to-night on the Address-in-Reply, and I should not do so now were it not that appeals have been made to me by hon. members to inform the House as to the intentions of the Government in regard to one or two questions. I do not think that it is a convenient time to make explicit statements upon the Address-in-Reply in regard to particular subjects, but I have not the slightest desire to avoid doing so. I think, however, that in regard to the great scheme of supplying the Coolgardie goldfields with water, we shall have another opportunity of discussing it, and anything I may have to say might perhaps be said more fittingly on that occasion. But as my hon. friend, the member for Coolgardie (**Mr. Morgans**), has asked me to give some assurance to the House in regard to this important project, I have not the least disinclination to do so. Hon. members are no doubt aware, and it is a patent fact, that the Government are authorised by statute to raise the money and to carry out this work under the law. Of course it is also well known that the Government are forbidden to expend money without the authority of Parliament, even after an Act authorising a particular work has been passed. For that reason, every year annual estimates in connection with expenditure from the consolidated revenue, and estimates in connection with expenditure under the various Loan Acts, are submitted for the information and approval of hon. members of this House; and last year we put on the Loan Estimates a sum which we considered would be sufficient for the year ending the 30th June last, in connection with the Coolgardie water scheme; but, as hon. members know, very little of that amount has been expended, for various reasons, the principal being that at the time we embarked on this great work and obtained the approval of Parliament, we also obtained the approval of Parliament to bor-



row three and a half millions for a number of other works, and hon. members are aware that a great deal of the expenditure authorised under the three and a half million Loan Act had been anticipated. We had indented for an immense amount of railway rolling stock, amounting to nearly £1,000,000, prior to the passing of that Act; and although the money had not been spent, still the indent had gone forward. That was the time when there was such a great demand for rolling stock, consequent on what was known as the railway block, and it was then that the Government had to take upon themselves great responsibilities in regard to ordering new supplies, even before Parliamentary sanction had been obtained. Then again there were improvements going on in connection with the greatly increased traffic on the railways; great improvements in duplicating the line between Midland Junction and Fremantle; also in changing the whole of the permanent way on the principal traffic lines of the colony, by laying down heavier rails, and making other improvements. Those hon. members who travel on the railway, particularly between Fremantle and the eastern districts, will have seen what changes and improvements have been made, and be convinced that a large amount of money must have been expended in keeping pace with the times. All this money had to be borrowed, and thus it came about that it was not possible for the Government to borrow with advantage a larger sum than something like £2,000,000 a year. This sum, if I may say so—and I am letting everyone into the secrets of the “prison house”—seems to me, at the present time, to be about the borrowing capacity of the colony—that is, on good terms, such as we want; but when I say the borrowing capacity, I mean the amount we can place successfully on the London market, so that the people will take our bonds, for if the public will not take them, brokers will not subscribe for our loans. Everyone knows that during the last year over £2,000,000 have been placed on the London market, namely, £1,100,000 in connection with the purchase of the Great Southern Railway and £1,000,000 of inscribed stock on account of the £3,500,000 loan. It has, therefore,

not been so easy to raise the £2,500,000 for carrying out the Coolgardie water scheme as it would otherwise have been; but I may inform hon. members and the people of this country that it would no doubt have been possible to have had this work already commenced, if we had received from the people of the goldfields, and from many others also, that support which I think we were entitled to. You all can understand the influence of men who represent capital invested in this colony—mining experts and persons entrusted with the management of large financial institutions, representing London capitalists here; and I think I may say that, with the exception of my friend the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) and a few others, those persons having influence with financial people in London have not given this project the support that they ought to have given it; and thus it has come about that in London, and also upon the goldfields, this project—although we carried it through both Houses without any division—has not received that support and has not been as popular as it ought to have been, in my opinion. All these things work together, and have their effect upon the public mind in one way or another, I have no doubt. Speaking most openly and frankly, they have had an effect upon myself, to some extent, and on those who were associated with me in this great work; and although we have never wavered or for a moment changed our opinion in the slightest degree in regard to the necessity for this great work, yet these influences have operated to defer for a time the carrying forward of this great work. It could hardly be expected that we should go on doing our best to raise money, on perhaps not very good terms, for commencing and pushing forward the work, unless we felt that we had the whole colony behind us in the demand that this work should go forward. I believe we have got them now, or are going to have them very shortly; for what has been the result of the delay on the part of the Government? The idea has gone forth that the Government are getting lukewarm on this matter; that they are not so anxious to carry out this great work; that, in fact, they are halting. I am glad that this opinion, although based on no ground whatever,

has gone forth, because it is just the effect I want; for I want to have the whole of the colony at my back in regard to this great project, and I believe the time is arriving, if it has not actually arrived, when the Government and those who have supported them in this great project will have the whole colony at their back. I believe that perhaps in a month or two the Government will be able to commence this work, if we receive that support which we think we are entitled to. It is not to be expected that I am going to take upon my own shoulders and the shoulders of my colleagues the whole responsibility of carrying out this work, if the people for whose benefit it is intended to do not join with us in taking some share of the responsibility. I believe they are now prepared to do that. We have had a lot of opposition and a lot of lukewarmness on the part of the very people we had intended to benefit by this work. I gave a number of reasons, when I addressed this House in regard to the scheme, as to why the opposition existed; but, notwithstanding those reasons, that opposition should never have existed, because I cannot believe that the people on the goldfields and other people are so high-minded, so disinterested, and so patriotic that they are thinking only of the interest of this country and not of their own interests. I do not think that is the case. I could not understand why the people on the Coolgardie goldfields were not, to a man, in favour of this great scheme. There was opposition, no doubt, and a great deal of it, but the reason why I never could really understand. I am quite sure of this, and I have stated it before, that the mass of the people on these goldfields must have been, and were, entirely in accord with the Government in their desire to improve their position and obtain a cheap and plentiful supply of good water. It has been stated that there have been various offers made to the Government in regard to carrying out this great project. I may say at once that, if I have anything to do with carrying out this great work, I intend to carry it out as a Government work. I believe this—and I speak with knowledge—that the Government can raise money and do the work better than any private individuals or any syndicate can do. We

can get the money easier in London, and we can get it cheaper, than any class of people or syndicate which might undertake to carry out this work. It goes without saying that this country, with its vast resources and the whole of its vast territory, has a higher credit, and that we are in a far better position to negotiate for and get cheap money than any other class of people who might undertake the work; and I believe we can do the work cheaper and better, and be free from all those entanglements which surround a work of this kind when entrusted to private individuals or syndicates.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You cannot get seven millions of money in a year.

THE PREMIER: We can get the money easier than any private individuals, and we have had some experience in regard to the difficulties of a company or syndicate raising money to carry out great works in this colony; for they have to give a large amount of security for underwriting the advances obtained, and they have to give all sorts of contributions in order to get the support of capitalists. All that does not affect the Government. We can raise money easily enough when we are ready. There will be no difficulty about it, if only a little time is given. Our credit is good—it was never better; and, seeing that we have already raised so many millions during the last six years, surely with our improved condition and our revenue of £3,000,000 a year, we can raise 2½ millions for this great work. The cost of it is not so much as people would make out. They talk about its costing millions. It will cost only 2½ millions, and we believe from all we know, and we know it is so, that the work will be quite practicable. We can get the water to the goldfields. People must have it, and they are willing to pay a reasonable amount for it. My idea is that, when we are ready to go on with this work, it should be done openly and by public tender, and we will get I believe by that means a cheaper tender for the work, in such shape as the Engineer-in-Chief and the Government can approve. We will get the work done more cheaply by that means than by letting the whole scheme to some large syndicate. Taking the dam, for instance, across the Helena River, that is a small work in itself; and I believe the plans

are all ready at the present time—everything is ready; and for this part of the scheme we can call for tenders at once. In fact we can either do it ourselves, if you like, or call for tenders before or at the same time as we call for tenders for the construction of the pipes. The Government have the whole thing ready, or will have the whole ready shortly. Everything is now ready for the dam, and the whole scheme will shortly be ready; therefore, if I receive during this session the support of hon. members of this House [Mr. DOHERTY: You have it now] when I lay the annual Estimates on the table for the necessary expenditure required in this work, and if you leave the work to the Government, we will see what we can do to put it in hand as quickly as possible. The hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) wants to make some bargain with me—[Mr. ILLINGWORTH: No]—he wants to bring in something about a water scheme for his own district; but I tell him to his face that, if he wants any bargain from me, he will not get it. I am not going to budge one inch from the position I have taken with regard to this Coolgardie water scheme. A water scheme for the Murchison or any other district must be dealt with at another time, and on its merits as a separate work. If the hon. member wants to tie his scheme on to this measure, he will get no support from me. [Mr. ILLINGWORTH: I have never said so.] Well, the hon. member has said several times, "What will you do for my district?" He has opposed this scheme all along; but I know we are strong enough in this House, even with the opposition of the hon. member, to carry out this work. The member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson) is now, I believe, a convert to this scheme—I think he has recently expressed himself in its favour; and I believe that the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), has come to this conclusion, at any rate, that it is hopeless to oppose a scheme which is receiving the almost unanimous support of the colony, and consequently he is likely to give us no opposition.

MR. LEAKE: I suppose I shall have an opportunity of speaking on this.

THE PREMIER: This is a work which Parliament approved of a year ago,

almost unanimously, and I believe Parliament is practically unanimous still. Two months ago (in the short session) I made a promise to the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) that we would not spend any money on this work until Parliament met again and had an opportunity of considering it; and subsequently (in the present session) he gave notice of this motion for referring the Coolgardie water supply scheme to a select committee. What has been the idea of the hon. member in taking this course? He knows very well that the Government obtained authority last year to expend money on this work, in the Act and in the Loan Estimates; therefore he knows the Government have a right to spend money on this work out of the Loan Estimates; but he wants to stop the work—at any rate for a time. This is clear, or he would not have given the two notices of motion which he did, and he would not have got the Government to give that promise in the first place, nor would he now desire them to promise that they will not do any work in connection with this scheme until Parliament has further approved of it. Surely there is only one object that the hon. member can have had in view, and that is to stop the work.

A MEMBER: He wants to be sure you can finish it when you start.

THE PREMIER: At any rate, now that he has moved the motion for referring the whole matter to a select committee, he will find that he will get very little support, certainly from this side of the House, and I am inclined to think he will get very little from his own side. So I think he had better do as he often says I have done—he had better "climb down." He had better say, "Don't shoot, captain; I will come down." I know that the hon. member does not like to be in a minority. Unfortunately, he is very often in that position; but I am sure he does not like it. I think the feeling of the country at the present time is very strong on this question; and I am glad to see it, because it proves that we were "wise in our generation," that we were equal to the occasion at that time. I am positive of this—looking back on what has passed during the last year or eighteen months, and looking at it from a political point of view with regard to our action in respect of this water scheme, that

if we had not been equal to the occasion at that time, if we had not foreseen that this scheme was absolutely necessary in the interests of these goldfields, we would never have had any progress at all. We would have been badgered and pestered by everyone on the goldfields, and by every member representing the goldfields; and the hon. members opposite would long ere this have taken up the scheme as an Opposition cry against the Government. I cannot help congratulating myself, when I think how wise we were in the interests of the country, and also in the interests of the Government, in embarking on this great project, which will have the effect of giving comfort to the people on the goldfields, and also giving them what they require in order to maintain their position as a gold-producing country. It will also transform the whole country from here to Coolgardie; it will provide water for our railways; it will be a blessing wherever it reaches, and I think it will be but the forerunner in Australia of many other similar schemes. I do not think I need say more about this, except that the Government are thoroughly in earnest. We have never wavered, never changed our opinion in regard to this great scheme; and I am glad indeed to find that the people of the colony generally—the people of the coastal districts, the farming population even—are, to a large extent, in accord with us; and those who are not in accord with us have not had an opportunity of knowing the whole of the facts of the case. Even in the Southern part of the colony, where the people have more water than they require, and have it at their doors, so that they can bathe in it every day, those people are now favourable to this scheme. Two friends of mine wrote to me some time ago, and said that they could not agree with me that the Coolgardie water scheme was one upon which the colony should embark. I at once wrote back to them enclosing a copy of the speech I made in this House on the second reading of the Bill, and I asked them to read it and give me their opinion in regard to it. I received in due course a reply from each, to the effect that they were absolutely convinced they had been wrong in their judgment, and that the scheme was absolutely necessary. That must be the opinion of every one who really deals

with this question with an open mind. I think I told hon. members some time ago that, while talking with one of the directors of the London and Westminster Bank, in London, he said that he had been reading my speech on the Coolgardie water scheme, and I asked him what his opinion was. I did not ask if he agreed with it, but I said: "Were you not convinced of its necessity?" and he replied, "I was," and added, "I have no doubt it is a work that is necessary in the interests of the goldfields of the colony." That must also be the conclusion arrived at by any person who knows anything of the place, by any person who has visited the goldfields and seen the great difficulties under which they labour. Hon. members sitting here, and sometimes hearing the rain coming down on the roof, hardly realise the condition of our eastern goldfields. When I tell you that there is not a drop of fresh water in any of the tanks on the whole of the Coolgardie goldfields, on the railway line from Boorabbin to Coolgardie, and on from Coolgardie to Menzies; that the great tanks constructed by the Government in many places are all dry at the present moment, and that there is not a drop of surface water in that great country—surely a man must come to the conclusion, if he has any thinking power at all, that this scheme is necessary. We want a river of fresh water to run, not for to-day, but for all time.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: A river running through a pipe.

THE PREMIER: It is not a question of the size of the pipe; it is a question of the speed with which the water goes through the pipe. I may tell members that the Preston River, near which I was born, although it is a stream that looks as if it would supply enough water for all the people of Western Australia many times over, yet the flow of that river is equal only to about five million gallons a day. Those who know that running creek, and who have some idea of what 5,000,000 gallons of water a day really is, will understand that the quantity depends not on the breadth of the stream, but on the speed at which it runs. We intend to make the Coolgardie goldfields a country through which there shall run a river of fresh water, not to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie only, but all the way to

Menzies. There is no reason at all why it should not also supply Black Flag, Broad Arrow, and Goongarrie as well; and if it is a reproductive work, when we have had experience of the expenditure of the first outlay on this water supply, it will be an easy matter to go farther if necessary. But the great point I wish to make is that, after a couple of years of trouble in regard to this matter, we have the statement of the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) that he is going to give his support to it—that he cannot find any other scheme which will give the necessary supply of water. Our boring at Coolgardie is down nearly 3,000ft.—more than half a mile in the earth—and let hon. members think of what that means! That is near Coolgardie, and we have not struck water yet. In fact, the Coolgardie district is drier now than I believe it has been at any time since the discovery of gold, and there seems to be no chance of getting water. The Government are going to stop the bore, certainly when it gets down three thousand feet, for I think it is a useless expenditure—expenditure brought on by members of this House, some of whom would not believe the geologists, but assured us that if we went down far enough we would be sure to get water. I do not know how much the boring there has cost, but it is an immense sum of money.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** About £20,000, up to the present.

**THE PREMIER:** Well, I do not know whether hon. members are going to advise us to go deeper, or whether they will advise us to bore at some other place on the goldfields. I think it would be wise to stop the boring there, and to spend our money in a direction where we are certain to get a return. A safe and certain supply will come through this Coolgardie water scheme; whereas, by boring in the earth, the chances are that we shall get nothing. The member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) spoke about conserving water. That is a very good plan indeed, but involves a great cost. The conserving of surface water is not a cheap process. We are trying water conservation at Niagara, and I do not know how much it will cost, but I suppose it will cost about £30,000 to put up a dam which will impound 35

or 40 million gallons of water. This is a great expenditure for such a small reservoir, and even then we are not certain to fill it.

**MR. MORGANS:** It will be a failure.

**THE PREMIER:** I hope it will not be a failure, but if it does fail temporarily, it will be filled when we get a sufficiently heavy rainfall. Altogether, unless you can impound an immense body of water at a small cost, it is really very questionable whether the conservation of surface water is a wise policy. We had better spend our money upon a safe and certain system, which will supply not only the people of these goldfields, but also the railways, and all the people *en route*. The money will be spent on a safe and certain system, which will supply not only the people of the goldfields, but also the railways and the people adjacent to the railways. Excepting Lake Carmody, about 80 miles this side of Coolgardie, there was no water all the way to Kalgoorlie, and trains had to run and carry the water to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. That was a fine condition to be in! If Carmody went dry, what would have to be done? We would have to depend on Northam, as we did some years ago. I have, perhaps, said more than is necessary, but I wish hon. members to understand I have nothing to keep back. I wish to be perfectly frank and open on this matter. I have been asked what the Government propose to do with regard to public crushers. Already the Minister of Mines has employed someone—whose name at this moment I do not know—to go and inspect the country, and gain information as to available sites for public batteries. As soon as that information is forthcoming, and we get a vote from Parliament, the work will be taken in hand. We could not very well go and spend £50,000, without the approval of Parliament. [A MEMBER: We would approve of it.] When the Government get the approval of Parliament, I hope that, before many days are over, the batteries will be ordered, and then got to work as quickly as possible. The hon. member for North-East Coolgardie has made reference to the hospitals. I am very glad to find that hon. member taking an interest in this subject, which is a very important one. The upkeep of the hospitals on the goldfields and else-

where in this colony is a matter requiring a great deal of consideration, and is a great burden on the colony. The Government have established hospitals here, there, and everywhere, and appointed boards to manage them—only to-day we appointed a board to manage the Kanowna hospital; but it seems that in providing these boards we have not got very far ahead, seeing that the Government have to provide the money, as before. The boards take a lot of trouble, but they do not relieve the Government of any financial responsibility. There is no attempt made anywhere to assist the Government in connection with the maintenance of hospitals, and the Government have practically to find the whole of the funds. I do not know whether that is a system that can continue for ever. No doubt, it is the first duty of the Government to look after the sick of the community, and the Government are determined to do their duty to the utmost of their ability. At the same time, I think the people throughout the colony should really carefully consider whether the time has not arrived, or will not soon arrive, when they must do as the people of the other colonies do, and contribute something to the support of the public hospitals. The Government try to do their best. We, as I have said, appoint boards all over the colony; we supply buildings and tents; we give £2 10s. per head to the board for every injured person taken in; we allow £100 a year for a medical man, and we give a pound for every pound collected by the board towards the hospital. With all this, I find that the amount contributed by the Government is not sufficient to keep up the hospitals. The boards find themselves unable to carry on without further contributions. Just to show how these things work, I may say that I heard of an instance in which a mine manager went into a public hospital, and did not pay anything while he was there. I presume he was able to pay, but the Government had to pay £2 10s. per week for him while he was there. When he left there he was generous enough to contribute £5 to the funds of the hospital. That contribution of £5 was made a plea for obtaining another £5 from the Government on the pound for pound principle, and the £5, I believe, was duly paid by the Government. I only

mention this to show that even people in good positions seem to think they have a right to go into the hospital and be kept at the Government expense. That is not what ought to be. A man who has the means should pay for any attention he requires. Public hospitals are only intended for poor people who cannot pay for medical attendance. If one thing more than another deserves our thanks, it is the way in which the people on the goldfields form themselves into committees and take over the control of hospitals and similar institutions. It would be very much better, however, if they collected a little more money, and did not make such frequent demands on the Treasury. In reference to the Coolgardie water scheme, I may say that only to-day I received a telegram from the Amalgamated Workers' Association of Coolgardie, which, I believe, embraces the whole of the fields, informing me that they had unanimously passed a resolution in favour of the Government proceeding with the scheme at the earliest possible moment. I am very grateful for that support. It has been said that the people on the goldfields do not require this scheme, but I think the fact that this representative organisation of workers on the goldfields thinks the work is necessary, at once shows a great change of feeling in those districts. It has always been a marvel to me why there should be two opinions about the scheme. I suppose some other hon. members will address the House; but, as I will not have an opportunity of speaking again, I desire to thank hon. members for the reception they have given generally to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. I am leaving out altogether the question which was decided last night. That was a trial of strength which I am glad occurred, because it shows unmistakably the strength of parties. It shows that although the Government have been seven years in office, and although there have been so many changes that I am the only one left out of the five men who undertook the Government in 1890, yet the Government as constituted to-day retain the support of the old friends who have sat with us on this side of the House. I desire to thank those old friends for the support they have given the Government. I hope that,

as time goes on, we shall continue to pull together and work unitedly for the good of the colony. I also desire to thank hon. members opposite for the reception they have given to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, with the exception, of course, of the one item to which serious objection was taken, and which formed the subject of the debate which terminated last night. I am sure that I and my colleagues feel grateful for the support extended to us. Honourable members will feel that we must try and get on as quickly as we can with the large amount of work before us. We have been a fortnight now in session, and we have not commenced business yet; so I hope any honourable members who have yet to address the House will do so as quickly as they consistently can, so that we may get to the real business of the session to-morrow. I thank honourable members very much for listening to the remarks I have made.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The right hon. the Premier says he only is left out of the original members who constituted his Government when he first took office. That was the condition of the prophet Elijah, who complained that he only was left of all those who served the Lord, yet there were 7,000 in Israel at that time whose knees had not bowed unto Baal, and whose mouths had not kissed him. I hope that on this side of the House the Premier will find there are a good many who have not bowed the knee to the Baal of self-interest, who are endeavouring to help the colony with the best lights they possess. The right hon. gentleman also made a remark with reference to the hospital question. There is a tendency in this House to imitate the older colonies, and to quote them as authorities in almost everything, when it suits the purpose of hon. members to do so. I think the system of seeking contributions from a few individuals for the support of public institutions of this character is getting very much into disrepute. It simply comes to this, that a few people in the community are constantly expected to support these institutions, while the mass of the community contribute almost nothing. The true system by which our poor can be equitably provided for is that which takes the funds out of the revenue of the country—a system which compels every man in the

community, who is able to contribute to the revenue, to contribute his proportion to the support of those who are in less fortunate circumstances than himself. What can be more equitable than a system of this kind under which every man gives his quota, and which does not fall heavily on individuals? Coming to the Address-in-Reply, I think there is no great need to discuss this at any great length, seeing the real strength of parties, as the right hon. the Premier put it, has been established, and the real conflict has been already fought out and settled. I would like to make a remark or two on some other propositions of the Government, and to express my mind very plainly thereon. We have dealt in a former session with paragraph 3, which is one of congratulation to the Premier and the colony as a whole. It is not necessary, therefore, to do more than to repeat that we all feel that this colony has been honoured, and not only this colony but the whole of Australia has been honoured, by what took place in London when the Premiers of the different colonies were present at the Jubilee celebrations. Touching the question of federation, which is dealt with in paragraph 4, I hope the Government will take the necessary steps to place the representation at the Federal Convention upon a popular basis. I am not sure that it is possible to do it this session, but, if it is possible, I think the question is of so much importance that the farce should end, of Parliament selecting ten men who are practically nominees of the Premier and are his dummy votes. We find that, out of these ten men, only three opened their mouths the whole time. It would be just as well and better for this country if we trusted the Premier with his own vote and nine proxies. As the honourable member for East Coolgardie suggested last session, let us give the right hon. gentleman nine proxies, and let him do as he very well pleases.

THE PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition was one.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Yes, but he went as a federationist, not as leader of the Opposition.

MR. LEAKE: What have I done?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You were one of the three who did your duty, but for the other seven it was not what they did, but what they omitted to do, that I com-

plain of. There is one other question which has not been touched on: I have taken a considerable amount of interest in it and have frequently alluded to it, indeed on every possible occasion—in fact ever since I have had the honour of a seat in this House I have insisted on the necessity of having some educational facilities on the goldfields. I congratulate the right hon. the Premier on his idea of establishing a school of mines; but surely he can hardly have considered this question rightly, when he proposes to establish this school in Perth. [THE PREMIER: When did I say that?] The hon. member for North-East Coolgardie was impressed in the same way as myself, that there was to be one school of mines, and that was to be in Perth. The reference to it in the Speech reads as follows:—"My Ministers hope also very soon to be able to establish metallurgical works and a school of mines, with the object of giving every facility possible to those who are engaged in opening up the auriferous and metalliferous areas of the colony." Of course the establishment of a school of mines would do some good wherever it might be placed; but it certainly should be established in one of our principal goldfields, and it should be followed as quickly as possible by other schools in the other principal centres. Take, for instance, the district which I have the honour to represent with other members in this House: can we get any benefit at Cue from a school of mines established, say, at Coolgardie? We want to know in what direction the right hon. gentleman intends to deal with the question? Of course you cannot establish half-a-dozen schools right off, but I want to know the direction in which the Government propose to travel. Schools should be established in a mining centre, certainly not in Perth, and, as soon as possible, branches of that school, or others like it, should be established in other principal centres, so that all the goldfield districts should have the advantage of educational facilities. Referring to the practice in Victoria, there is, for instance, a school of mines at Bendigo, which works for that mining centre, and there is a school of mines at Ballarat, which works for that centre; but they have no school of mines in Mel-

bourne, the capital of the colony, nor was it ever dreamed of that one should be established there. I hope the Government will consider the desirability of establishing schools of mines in the principal centres on our goldfields, and will not consider the case met by establishing one in Perth as the capital of the colony. One thing that is constantly iterated, and which by repetition becomes irritating, is the word "Coolgardie," as if there were no other goldfield than that of Coolgardie, and it seems to be the idea of some members of this House that there is no other goldfield than Coolgardie. An expression of opinion has been made in reference to the Coolgardie water scheme, and I do not intend at this stage to enter upon that subject, more than to express my concurrence in some of the remarks of the Premier as to the manner in which that work should be carried out, if undertaken at all. I do hope that if any proposals are entertained by the Government from any private syndicate or company to undertake the construction of this great work, two things in particular will be borne in mind: firstly, that no company shall be allowed to carry out this water scheme, if that company is going to bring foreign labour into the market to do it. If, for instance, a French syndicate or company were to enter into a contract with the Government, it should be made a condition that that the undertakers must do the work with the ordinary labour in the country. Nothing would be more fatal than for this or any other great scheme of public works to be placed in the hands of a foreign company, and that company be allowed to land on these shores perhaps 20,000 or 30,000 workmen to carry it out. If there were no other objection to the syndicate method of constructing public works, and especially this water scheme, that would be one objection. It should also be necessary to fix a scale of charges for the water; but as we have had almost a declaration that the Government will not entertain such a proposal, there is no need to refer to it now. I must once again express my opinion in regard to paragraph 13 of the Governor's Speech, referring to the purchase of the Great Southern Railway and the way in which the payment for it in bonds was managed. [THE PREMIER: You did that



before.] I intend to do it again. Nothing has been more fatal to the credit of the country than the bad management of the Government in reference to those bonds; nothing has more injured our credit, next to the folly of asking Parliament to pass for expenditure seven millions of money in one session. But as to the management of the bonds, we have had an expression of some disappointment from the Government benches, and considerable regret on the part of supporters in reference thereto, and that is sufficient to assure this House and the country that such a mistake is not likely to occur again. I want to say a word about the Mining Commission. I believe it is doing good work, and is likely to do good; but I do object to the one-sided way in which that Commission has been appointed, for it is not fully representative of the different centres interested in mining questions. I regret also that the great good which the Mining Commission is likely to do is reduced by the consideration that we are not likely to get an amendment of the Mining Act this session, for the Commission has to travel in order to get the necessary information, and that means such a delay as will make it practically impossible for this House to consider, at proper length and with proper care, a Bill for the amendment of the Mining Act in this session. This I very much regret, because I think the Act requires immediate amendment in many particulars; and we should also have some expression of opinion in regard to the manner in which the Government have dealt with the Regulations, particularly in reference to labour. Amongst the Bills named in paragraph 17 of the Speech, it is to me a matter of great regret that, notwithstanding that in the country and in this House appeals have been made to the Government to bring in an equitable Electoral Bill, no proposal is made in the Speech for dealing with that important matter in the present session. It does seem to me that the Government do not desire the people to express their mind at the ballot-box. The difficulties surrounding the electors are accumulating instead of being dissipated; and the present Act, in its application, practically excludes a very large number of electors who ought to be on the roll, but are not

able to get there. It is the duty of the Government to see that they have behind them the voice of the people, as far as that voice can be heard; and under constitutional government, so far from the Executive desiring to limit the number of electors by a system which practically precludes men from getting on the roll, they should give every possible facility to do so. It is a man's birthright, and so long as you take precautions to prevent electors from voting more than once, there can be no possible objection to any man who has been the necessary time in the country having his vote, so that he may use it. I say these technical difficulties should be at once removed; but I presume it will be too late for any private member to attempt to deal with the question this session by bringing in a Bill, and, even if it were within his province as a private member to bring in a Bill amending the Electoral Act, we should probably have to wait until next session before it could be done. But I would urge upon the Government that, in the recess, they should give this question the consideration which its importance demands; and that, early in the next session, we may have an Electoral Bill based upon the principle that every man shall be able to procure his birthright in this country with as little trouble to himself as is possible. Every year since I have been in this House I have been urging upon the Government the necessity of having a Civil Service Bill, and of having the civil service of this country placed upon a proper footing; that the rights of civil servants should be maintained, and that justice should be done to the country as well as to them. It has not been done under our present system, and we can only remedy the evil by having a Civil Service Board, or a Civil Service Bill, at any rate, which will place our civil service upon a proper footing. I know there are difficulties attached to it, and I presume that is one of the reasons why the Government do not push this matter on; but we really must face this difficult question. We have quite an army of civil servants now; and I question whether we have not far too many. If this over-manning of the service goes on, we shall find ourselves in a similar position to the other colonies—with a

crowded-out civil service, which will be an expensive luxury for the colony. The only way in which we can deal with this question is by means of a Bill, which will place the civil service upon a proper and equitable basis. It is, however, too late in this session to hope that the Government will bring in a Bill, and I am not going to ask them to do so; but I will again urge upon the Government the necessity of giving this question careful consideration during the recess. Now that they have a Victorian on the Ministerial bench, possibly they may be able to get some assistance on this question from him. I come now to a matter that is important to the colony at large, and of some importance, I suppose, to every mining district. It is the question of public batteries. First of all, I want to say that £50,000 is an absurd sum with which to propose to put batteries upon the goldfields of this colony. Public batteries, if they are to be effective, must be distributed in the districts where their presence is required. And, if you are going to start with a miserable £50,000—

**THE PREMIER:** It is only for one year. It is a very good start, I think—out of revenue, too.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Well, it is a very good start in its way; but the public battery question is not like the Coolgardie water question—it is not a scheme which requires to be begun, continued, and ended during the next seven or fourteen years, but it is something which may be pushed forward in every district at once. A public battery of 10-head can, I presume, be erected in most places for £5,000—not much less, taking into consideration the distances to which the plant will have to be carried. By way of illustration, we want one on the boundary of my own district and that of my friend the representative for North Murchison, and that is the district of Tuganari. Here is a district having a large quantity of stone of high grade, running from four to six ozs., and the miners are 30 miles from any battery. Those claims were taken up by poor men, and they are held to-day, I am glad to say, by poor men. I have said before, and I say again, that one of the things most fatal to the interests of this country is the selling of our mines to foreign companies; because it simply means that,

if you get your first call, a matter of £5,000 or £10,000 for a mine, then ever afterwards the whole of the gold returns go out to pay dividends elsewhere. The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgaus) has given us figures on this point that I cannot dispute. He tells us that 85 per cent. of this gold is going out to foreign countries. To prevent this, we want to encourage the small holder to stick to his mine and get the gold for his own benefit and the benefit of the country. The man who gets five or ten thousand pounds' worth of gold out of his mine and lives in this country will spend the money, probably, in further developing the country, and by this means the colony will go on to success. But when a man simply finds a gold mine and then sells it to some London company, the colony does not get one particle of benefit out of it, except, perhaps, in the shape of taxes on the food eaten by the men working in the mine. One instance I wish to give—firstly because it concerns something on which I am fully informed, and secondly because I want to impress on the Government that Tuckanara or Boyd's Find is where they should erect the first battery—is that here is a rich mine, thirty miles from any other district, with men there, poor men, holding on to their mine, dolly-ing what they can to keep alive, and waiting anxiously for the fulfilment of the promise of the Government. Stepping outside my own district, but still within the Murchison, we come to Jones's Well, and the hon. member who represents that district will of course speak strongly on the subject when he has an opportunity; but, having originally represented the whole of the district, I know something about it. At Jones's Well we have a rich gold mine in the hands of poor men. This field is only some nine or ten miles from existing batteries, but the present batteries are fully occupied in doing work for their own companies, and, in addition to this, if they were not so occupied it would not pay to cart the stone that distance. There seems to be some difference of opinion between the members of the Ministry who have spoken on this question. The Premier, however, seems to have moderated his views, or rather his opinion differs from that of the Minister of Mines. [**THE PREMIER:** No, no.] Well, the Minister of Mines

said he would not put up any battery within thirty miles of any existing battery. Of course that will do for Tuckanara well enough, but it will not do for Jones's Well and many other places. I am sure that hon. members in many other parts of the goldfields will find themselves in the same position. We want the Government to send us efficient assistance, after satisfying themselves that the case is a deserving one, that the men are worthy, and that the field is capable of development—we want them to put up these batteries as fast as possible. I am prepared to support the Government, not only to the extent of £50,000, but in giving £200,000 for this purpose. But we want some care exercised in reference to these batteries. One thing that might be fatal to the scheme would be the putting on of one man, or some few men, at the start who might mismanage the whole project—who would bring the whole thing into disrepute by failing in the initiation of the work. We do not want favouritism in the question: we want men who understand what a battery is and how to work it, and who will make the scheme a success. Again, we want a battery that is a battery and will save gold. We do not want a broken-down, discredited battery from some other mine, where it has failed. We want the best possible battery that can be procured—within the range of its size, of course. We want the best possible appliances that can be obtained. There is a great danger of the Government throwing away the whole of the money, and discrediting the system, and also a danger of their appointing a bad manager. These are two of the most important and vital considerations in connection with the battery question. I hope the Government will put up good batteries, not coffee mills, in districts where they are really required, and will put them up without reference to distance. I hope batteries will be put on fields that are proved sufficiently to warrant their erection. The goldfields people are not coming to the Government as paupers. We want the Government to put up batteries which will be self-supporting, and I would like the Premier to take a note of that fact. No doubt the goldfields people want the charges to be as low as possible, but they want the charges to be sufficient to cover the cost of work-

ing, wear and tear, sinking fund, and sufficient to pay back to the State the money invested in them—[THE PREMIER: And interest]—and interest. The goldminers would be very pleased, after satisfying the conditions I have mentioned, to pay back to the State within any reasonable time, say 10 to 15 years, the cost of the batteries. I am expressing my own opinions on this question.

THE PREMIER: They are very good opinions.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I congratulate the Government on their intention to make the Education Act complete on the lines which were initiated some time back. The small sum got for school fees is not worthy of consideration. I hope we shall have before very long a free and compulsory system of education in this colony. In paragraph 21 of the Governor's Speech there is reference to the progress being made at the Pilbarra, Norseman, East Murchison, and other outlying goldfields. That progress is of such importance that the Government ought to give consideration to the requirements of those fields. One of the difficulties of the Coolgardie water scheme is that it is a sort of Aaron's rod, which is going to swallow up everything else. That is where the trouble comes in. The Coolgardie scheme will exhaust all the forces of the Government, and those very fields which require consideration will necessarily be excluded for a long time to come. That is a question, however, which I will deal with when I come to the motion of which I have given notice. Paragraph 22 has been fully dealt with—[THE PREMIER: Very fully]—to the satisfaction of this side of the House. [THE PREMIER: And this side also.] I am glad to hear it. There is one question on which I desire to say a word. Paragraph 23 of His Excellency's Speech deals with the revenue, expenditure, etc., and it is stated that there are £750,000 in Treasury bills current which will be redeemed when further instalments are floated. This question of finance is a good deal more important than many people seem to think. The sum was £750,000, but probably, by this time, there is another quarter of a million, and before long there may be another half million, making a million and a half, or perhaps two millions.

THE PREMIER: Three quarters of a million is right.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: How many have been issued since? [THE PREMIER: None at all.] Oh, then that is all right. The amount is well up towards a million, on which we are paying 4 per cent. I believe the Government could raise a loan at the present time at £93. The Premier, as Treasurer, is in very good hands when he entrusts our financial business to the London and Westminster Bank, although a good deal has been said against that bank in reference to the financial transactions of other colonies. A bank is a bank, and has its own profits to make and its own game to play. It should not be to the interest of the London and Westminster Bank, or any other financial institution in the world, to hinder a Government obtaining loans on the London market. But I am speaking with some little knowledge, supported by the opinions of some of the best banking men in the city, when I say we are getting into some danger. Those 4 per cent. bonds will be, if they are not already, sold in London at an advance—perhaps a considerable advance—on the price which the Government are obtaining for them. If we get £1,000,000 scattered about London that has been bought at £106 or £107, as the case may be, from the London and Westminster Bank, it becomes a question whether we may not be hindered, by the very institution which represents us, from floating a loan at 3 per cent. Depend upon it, so long as people can get 4 per cent. for a loan, they are not going to take Government bonds at 3 per cent. The investors may not be able to hold out all the time; but, in the meantime, we have to face the fact that 3 per cent. bonds sold at £93 are about equivalent to 4 per cent. bonds at £125. Although our bonds at 4 per cent. are only about £110, yet still the value of the money we are borrowing at the present moment is equivalent to £125, as against the £100 we are receiving. Consequently, at the present moment, we are paying 29 per cent. interest; and neither a country nor an individual can successfully conduct business on such terms. I urge on the Government to see that those Treasury bonds are redeemed at the earliest possible moment, and a loan raised, even though the loan be at the low price of £93.

THE PREMIER: When you are Treasurer, you can do that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There is no chance of it. I am too old, and shall be dead before there can be any possible chance of my getting on to the Treasury bench. I want to call attention to one other question. I have spoken to the Commissioner of Railways about it—and that is the urgency of something being done by the Government at once in connection with the Midland Railway. I have received certain advice which leads me to urge on the Government the necessity of taking prompt action in connection with this company. No further consideration should be allowed them; and, if proper representations are made to the Government, immediate and very careful attention should be given to them, because the time is coming when we shall have to buy the railway, and we don't know any moment that something may not happen to greatly increase its price. Something is going on in London at the present moment which may increase the price of the railway in the very near future, and I therefore ask the Government to give the Midland Railway question consideration at the earliest possible moment. It is not necessary to go into details. If five or ten years hence we are called upon to pay twice as much as we should have to pay now, it will not be because I have not urged the matter upon the Government. I congratulate the Government upon the programme which they have placed before the House. As far as I can, I intend to help them to carry it out. There are many things which I would like to have seen in it that are not included in that programme, but, considering that the Premier has been away gathering honours for himself and for the colony generally, perhaps the programme is as comprehensive as we could fairly have expected it to be.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): For the last hour I have been patiently waiting, in answer almost to the request of the Premier, to speak on behalf of the Eastern goldfields, one of the largest of which, with a population of 15,000, I have the honour to represent; and to reassure the right hon. gentleman that what I said before, namely that nine-tenths of the people there are and always have been in favour of the Government water scheme, was perfectly

correct. Even the prominent mining men on the Kalgoorlie field, who laughed at this great scheme when the Premier first proposed it, took the trouble to wait upon me and the hon. member for North Murchison (Mr. Kenny), when visiting there, and asked us as a favour not to oppose the water scheme. These were the most practical men in the place, those who said we should have trouble if some scheme were not carried out for taking water to the field; and in tones of trepidation they pointed out that they were now getting below the water level in Kalgoorlie, and that water was absolutely necessary for carrying on operations on the field. Of course they knew my views on the question; but they called upon us to impress us with the urgency of the matter. We are going to have the very same trouble this summer that we have had before. Railway engines are going to be blocked, and the Commissioner of Railways is going to have any amount of trouble in coping with the traffic owing to the difficulty of obtaining water. There has been an apparent falling off in the Premier's enthusiasm with reference to the Coolgardie water scheme. Never did he make such a speech as when introducing that scheme, or use such invincible arguments and towering eloquence; yet the Governor's Speech reads as if the Government had become lukewarm on the subject. I felt there was a screw loose somewhere, and I find that this loose screw is the result of a desire on the part of the Government to have this scheme pressed for by the people. Let me assure the Government that there is not to-day in the whole of the Coolgardie fields one enemy to that scheme. There is not a single mining manager who will say he does not want the scheme, and not one who would not, if necessary, be found agitating and loudly calling on the Government to carry it out. The agricultural community are as ready to support the scheme as they were. I am proud indeed that the good sense of the Opposition has led them also to give the scheme their support. I am pleased that the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper), who was such a rabid opponent of the scheme, and who wrote it down so very vehemently in the *Coolgardie Miner*, the leading paper of Coolgardie, has acknowledged that no

other scheme at the present time before the public offers a safe solution of the water difficulty. He has taken the same line of action that I take in asking for a survey of the surrounding lakes. Subsidiary schemes may be necessary, because the great scheme will at first only touch Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and Kanowna. The hon. member is sensible enough to see that the Government are on the right track. As the leading engineering authorities who were consulted have said that there is no difficulty in the way of the scheme, and no one can be found to say that it is not wanted, why then do the Government delay one moment in carrying it out? With reference to the offer of the French syndicate, I know something of the terms, as I was waited on by the representative of the syndicate, in common, I dare say, with other members for the goldfields. The French offer must not be mistaken with that suggested by the member for Central Murchison. The French syndicate only wish to act as the contractors for the work, and have no idea of taking over the scheme to work it for themselves, although they are willing to formulate a plan for taking over the scheme afterwards. The French syndicate are willing to undertake the work for a quarter of a million less than the sum estimated by the Government, and if so I am with them. I spent an hour with the representative of the syndicate, and explained that if the syndicate undertook the work we could not allow any importation of labour under specific wages. He asked if there would be any objection to their bringing a few leading artificers, to which I replied that we would not object to their bringing expert labour, but that we should object to any daily labour being imported from any part of the world; that the bulk of the labour would have to be found in the colony. So the hon. member who has just spoken, spoke wisely on that point. It may not be right for me to mention what are the terms for which the company propose to build the waterworks. Suffice it to say that this eminent engineer, who has shown his credentials to the Engineer-in-Chief of this colony, is prepared to do the work for £2,231,000, which is considerably below Mr. O'Connor's estimate, and is also prepared to raise a loan, to underwrite it, on very favourable terms indeed.

I am of opinion that we should not be bound to one money market, if we can open another; and I say we have not been treated fairly in our mining flotations in the London market, nor were we treated fairly in the floating of our last loan for the colony, as there was a big gap between the price of our last loan and the price of the previous one. There is no reason why we should not deal with a country like France, in a matter of this sort; and if the Premier will fix up that scheme with a French company it will, in my opinion, absolutely re-establish our credit in the London market. I remarked with great pleasure that the Premier has thrown something off his chest to-night, that is a certain amount of gloom in reference to the Coolgardie water scheme. That gloom arose from the fact that the people of the goldfields did not come forth as generously as they ought to have done in supporting this great scheme; but now they are admitting their mistake, and are ready to make up for it. I say the Premier deserves from the people of this colony, and especially from the people of the goldfields, very strong support. It is quite enough for him to have to push a big scheme like this through Parliament, and he ought not to have to push the colony along with it. Every man, woman, and child on the goldfields to-day are strongly in favour of this scheme, and the people are sinking every smaller consideration and "planking" every time for the Government in reference to this great scheme. Speaking at this stage in the debate on the Address-in-Reply, one is reminded of the desolation of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." The dead bones of the Opposition are strewn about the place, and we have a certain amount of regret for those we have slain in the late battle. My main object in rising was to assure the Premier that the people on the goldfields are entirely at one with him, and to express my pleasure at the good sense of the Opposition in dropping the question in this way, and treating this great undertaking as a national work, and not a party matter. But when the member for Central Murchison brings forward the motion of which he has given notice, and which is evidently put there for the purpose of blocking the Coolgardie water scheme —

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is not my object at all.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member knows that his motion is on the Notice Paper for that object; but I say that the object can be better gained by allowing us to have our scheme uninterfered with than by bringing forward that motion at the present time.

Question—that the Address-in-Reply be agreed to—put and passed without dissent.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:6 p.m. until the next day.

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### Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 28th October, 1897.

Presentation of Address-in-Reply—Paper Presented—Question: Boorabbin Telegraph Station—Perth Gas Company's Act Further Amendment Bill (private); Report of Select Committee—Motion: Extra Sitting Day—Return: Purchases under Lands Purchase Act (m. withdrawn)—Return: Government Advertisements in Newspapers—Motion: Coolgardie Water Supply Scheme: Proposal for Select Committee (m. withdrawn)—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY—PRESENTATION.

At 20 minutes to five o'clock MR. SPEAKER, accompanied by hon. members, proceeded to Government House to present the Address-in-Reply to the opening Speech of His Excellency; and, having returned,

MR. SPEAKER reported that he had, with members of the House, waited on His Excellency and presented the Address of the Legislative Assembly in reply to