

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan): I have only one or two words to say. I believe a motion will be made for the adjournment of the debate, and I think quite rightly, so that members may have some farther time to consider this Bill and compare it with similar measures of other countries. I have not had an opportunity of comparing it with the English and the Victorian Acts, but there were in the Bill of last session one or two clauses which to my mind were not so plain and clear as the corresponding clauses in those statutes. These may have been amended in this draft, though I cannot ascertain that without reading it through. I think a construction could be placed on Clause 10 which certainly is not intended; that is, it may be made applicable to private houses: "No person shall, for the purpose of human consumption, sell or purchase, or have on his premises, any impure, unsound, or unwholesome flour."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Insert the words "for sale" after "premises."

HON. G. RANDELL: I wish also to point out that some of the subclauses of Clause 12 apply not only to the baker, the confectioner, and the seller of bread, but to the miller also. Perhaps Mr. Piesse will take note of that. As to the carrying of scales, I voted for that last session, and think it right that the carter should carry scales to weigh the bread if the purchaser so desires. I do not feel strongly about the reinsertion of the word "wilfully" in Clause 14; but that was added by this House last session, after a long discussion and considerable argument. As to Sunday labour, I am quite in accord with Clause 16 as it stands. However, one hon. member moved last session that the hour mentioned should be five o'clock, and I think he gave some fairly good reasons for his action, which I believe was the result of a conference he had with some of the bakers of Perth. However, it is a small matter whether bakers must wait till 5 p.m. or till 7 p.m. before being allowed to bake bread on Sundays. I see they are permitted to prepare the bread by mixing the yeast, and so on, before 7 p.m. Perhaps the Bill is needed. I am not much in favour of this class of legislation; but seeing that it prevails all over the world, and that the customer has a right

to be protected against bad food, and knowing as we do that in other countries bakers will give short weight and sell inferior bread, though this never happens in Western Australia, I presume we have a right as far as possible to protect the public. I think it our duty to protect them against dishonest tradesmen. Reserving to myself the right of considering and seeking to alter some of the clauses when passing through Committee, I agree with the principle of the Bill.

On motion by the HON. A. G. JENKINS, debate adjourned until the next sitting.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 7:56 o'clock, until the next day.

### Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 28th July, 1903.

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—PREMIER'S STATEMENTS, UNEMPLOYED LABOUR.

MR. BATH (Hannans) gave notice that he would ask the Premier the following question:—

1. Did the Premier make the following remarks in his policy speech at the Town Hall on July 3rd:—"The State clamoured on every hand for men prepared to work, and the present difficulty was entirely temporary. He would be sorry to think that there was not

room here for every man who was prepared to work hard for his living." 2. If so, will he have explicit information of the portions of the State so clamouring furnished to the Government Labour Bureaus in the districts where the unemployed are clamouring for works?

**THE PREMIER** said: I can answer the question at once. I made the statements; and if the hon. member will come along I will give him a map of Western Australia, which will answer the second part of his question.

#### QUESTION—ESPERANCE RAILWAY SURVEY.

**MR. JACOBY**, on behalf of Mr. Thomas, asked the Premier: Whether he would give instructions for the survey of the proposed Goldfields-Esperance Railway to be pushed on more rapidly, in order that the report might be available before the present Parliament ends.

**THE PREMIER** replied: The survey will, at the present rate of progress, be completed probably in January next. By putting on an additional survey party, however, it could be completed by next November, but the additional expense would be out of proportion to the small saving of time.

#### QUESTION—GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY SLEEPERS, REPLACING.

**MR. TEESDALE SMITH** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Whether the Minister's attention had been drawn to a paragraph which appeared in the *Morning Herald* having reference to the replacing of sleepers on the Eastern Goldfields Railway. 2, Whether the Government would request the Royal Commission on Forestry to examine into the condition of the rejected sleepers, with a view to ascertaining whether the expense involved in re-sleeping was justified, and, if so, ascertaining the cause of the sleepers becoming useless.

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: Yes.

#### QUESTION—LAND RE-PURCHASES NEAR ARRINO.

**MR. TAYLOR**, on behalf of Mr. Stone, asked the Minister of Lands: 1, What land the Government had purchased in the vicinity of Arrino. 2, From whom

it had been purchased. 3, What was the amount of the purchase money. 4, What was the land purchased for. 5, Whether the Government had any land in the vicinity.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** replied: 1, 12,000 acres to the South and East of Yandanooka. 2, W. B. Gordon. 3, £4,800, being the amount recommended by the Lands Purchase Board after personal examination. 4, Subdivision and sale under the Agricultural Land Purchase Act. 5, No land suitable for agriculture.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY STATION, CLAREMONT.

**MR. FOULKES** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Whether the construction of a railway station in the vicinity of Congdon Street, Claremont, would be commenced on the 1st day of August next. 2, What had been the reason for the delay in such construction.

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied, as follows: 1, Arrangements in connection with this work are proceeding, and it is expected that a start will be made next month. 2, August was the date contemplated.

#### QUESTION—NORTHAM REQUIREMENTS, BUILDINGS.

**MR. JACOBY**, on behalf of Mr. Throssell, asked the Minister for Works and Railways: 1, Whether it was the intention of the Government to make provision for the erection of a refreshment room at the West Northam railway station. 2, Whether it was intended to provide for the erection of Magistrate's Quarters at Northam, as promised some time ago.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS AND RAILWAYS** replied: 1, For some time past the Commissioner has been endeavouring to provide one of the existing rooms at this station for the purpose of a refreshment room, but one cannot at present be spared. The railway dining cars will shortly arrive and if, after their advent, there exists a necessity for a refreshment room at West Northam Station, the question will be again considered. 2, The matter is under consideration.

### QUESTION—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS, LEGISLATION.

MR. HIGHAM asked the Attorney General: Whether it was his intention to introduce, this session, a Bill to amend the Legal Practitioners Act, as promised last year.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: If time permits, the Government propose to do so this session; if not, the matter will be dealt with during the next session.

### QUESTION—LIQUOR INSPECTION.

MR. HIGHAM asked the Colonial Treasurer: Referring to answer to Question 7th October, 1902 (*vide* page 1404 of *Hansard*, 1902), 1, What steps had been taken to provide proper inspection of liquor sold in licensed premises. 2, How many, if any, officers had been appointed. 3, The number of informations laid during the twelve months expiring 30th June, 1903. 4, The number of convictions secured during the same period.

THE TREASURER replied: 1, Inspectors have been appointed throughout the State to safeguard public interests. 2, Eighteen. 3, Nil. 4, Nil.

### JOINT SITTING OF HOUSES, ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. SPEAKER informed the House that, in accordance with the Standing Orders passed by both Houses of Parliament, arrangements had been concluded whereby a joint meeting of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly would be held at Government House on Wednesday, 29th July, at 4.45 p.m., for the purpose of electing a Senator to the Federal Parliament in the place of Mr. Norman Kirkwood Ewing, resigned.

### ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, assenting to Supply Bill, £1,000,000.

### OPPOSITION LEADERSHIP.

MR. S. C. PIGOTT (West Kimberley): Sir, Having been elected by gentlemen sitting on this (Opposition) side of the House to the position I now occupy, I mention this in order to ask the House to give me every consideration.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James): I desire to offer my friend my hearty congratulations. It would be ungenerous of me to wish him a long and successful career, and perhaps it would be self-contradictory. I will, in the most unqualified manner, wish him the support of the combined body of men sitting on that side of the House, so that whenever a question crops up we may know what is the strength of parties, and be able to distinguish by the expression of principles which side of the House represents democracy, and which side represents stagnation.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### FOURTH DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous Thursday.  
MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): In rising to say a few words in regard to the Address-in-Reply, I have pleasure in expressing my personal joy at the fact that you, sir, are again presiding over our deliberations, and I hope we shall long have the honour of sitting under your presidency. I have pleasure likewise in congratulating my friend the hon. member for Boulder (Hon. J. M. Hopkins) on his accession to the office he now holds, and I am sure very many in this House feel that the Ministry has been strengthened by the inclusion of that hon. member in its ranks. While offering these congratulations, I cannot refrain from expressing regret, in relation to a recent Ministerial action which involved inquiry into the working of an important public department, that the hon. gentleman conducted the inquiry in private. I think it is much to be regretted that his investigation into the working of the Stock Department and the complaints made against it by a business firm in this city was not made under the eyes of the Press, so that the public as well as members of this House might have an opportunity of carefully following that inquiry step by step, in order that their judgment might either confirm or dissent from the Minister's decision. I would like also to take exception—perhaps I should hardly say “like to do it”—I must take exception to the attitude of the member for Wellington (Mr. Teesdale Smith) in his remarks on the

Address, so far as those remarks related to the Commissioner of Railways. The hon. member may or may not, as a gentleman representing an important business combination, have some cause of complaint against the Railway Department. If he has such complaint it ought, in my opinion, to be laid before the Minister in charge of the department, who is responsible to this House for its administration. If the Minister fails to take action, either in the direction of inquiry or by farther action if farther action be demanded regarding the complaints, it seems to me that then would be the time to bring the matter before Parliament. But in any case, I doubt the propriety of a member importing private business concerns into this House, where he occupies a seat for the purpose not of representing a business firm, but of expressing the will of the electors who sent him here. I shall always deprecate the introduction of what may be called "shop" topics into the House by any member. It seems to me that the most important consideration which will come before us during this session is the relation of the two Houses to one another, and I am afraid that in the past we have been inclined frequently to shirk this question. The consequence of our shirking it is simply that we have lost a large amount of power which this Chamber undoubtedly should possess, and have allowed another place to be absolutely dominant in Western Australia. During last session there were many measures introduced to the Assembly, and time after time when those measures were under discussion, if a member ventured to bring forward proposals that very likely had the assent of the majority of members of this Chamber, he was requested to abandon them because they might not suit the views of members of another place. We have in this Assembly followed the principle of peace-at-any-price, and I am sorry to say it has been an absolutely disastrous policy. We made sacrifices of all sorts in the Electoral Bill, in the Constitution Amendment Bill, and in the Factories Bill, to another place, and we simply found, as the result, that after weeks of labour the members of this House were treated without the slightest consideration by members of another place. Our

work was simply allowed to be absolutely wasted, and it will have to be begun again this session. We have already had one discussion during this session in which again the cry, that we must not express our opinion if it differs from that of another place, has been raised, and I wish now to protest against this House allowing itself to be absolutely ignored; against its slavish consideration, for I can use no other term to describe it, its slavish consideration for the will of another place, and its utter disregard very frequently, in considering another place, of the wishes of the electors whom this House is supposed to represent. I hope that a more manly spirit will pervade the Chamber during this session, and I trust that the rejected measures of last session when re-introduced will be found stronger and more pronounced in their various clauses than when they left this Chamber last year. If it should prove otherwise, I trust that this House will decide that the fullest demands of the people of the State shall be met in regard to those measures, irrespective of the amount of consideration they may get or what the form of their reception may be, in another place. Compromise has been tried, and we find that compromise has absolutely failed. The motto of another place has been for us "give," and for its own part "take." We have repeatedly given; we have gone much farther than we ought; and I hope that the House will during the present session stand absolutely on the fundamental principles which the majority of its members have been returned to advocate. At all events I for one—and I believe the party with which I am associated shares my opinion—am absolutely against any farther compromise. If we pass measures and they are rejected by another place after we have given in them full expression to our views, then on another place must rest the responsibility of rejection. I wish to say a word or two in regard to the position of parties in this Chamber. Here again I regret that personally I cannot regard the existing state of affairs as satisfactory. We have sitting on either side of the House members whose policies are practically identical. I do not think there is anything in their policies to prevent the most extreme Ministerialist and the most extreme

Oppositionist from amalgamating or coalescing, if it should suit their purposes to do so. In fact, members on the Opposition and those on the Ministerial sides of the House hold in the main identical opinions respecting the various topics which come before us. The leader of the Opposition, in his recent speech, found nothing to criticise in the policy of the Government. Similarly, the Opposition Whip was entirely able to indorse all the Government proposals.

MR. JACOBY: No; not altogether.

MR. DAGLISH: There were minor differences, but they were not so great as the differences between the individual opinions of members of the same Cabinet frequently are. To my mind it is unfortunate for Western Australia that there should be this, I was going to say happy agreement, but I had better say unhappy agreement, between the political opinions of the two sides of the House; because such agreement will not make for good government or sound administration. Moreover, such an agreement places the Government—

THE PREMIER: Surely that is far better than to have too equal a balance of parties, with a third party holding the balance of power.

MR. DAGLISH: I venture to think that the best administration is got when parties are fairly evenly balanced.

MEMBER: What about the third party, then?

MR. DAGLISH: I have come to the third party already. Possibly the hon. member interjecting never will. If the two parties are evenly balanced, then a Ministry is very careful and critical in regard to every action it takes, knowing that its fate may be precipitated by a single false move. At present, however, the Government, with a large body of followers behind and an almost equally large body of followers facing them, are in the position of knowing that minor mistakes, and even a few gross mistakes, count for nothing, because of the fact that the two sides together constitute so vast a majority that the Government position is absolutely impregnable. I greatly regret that we cannot get here a return to distinct party government.

MR. JACOBY: I thought you were supporting the Government.

MR. DAGLISH: I have never yet posed as a Government supporter, and I do not intend. I have posed as an independent member, and as a member of an independent party. I greatly regret that an opportunity was not afforded this party to fulfil the functions which so far have not been fulfilled in this House—the functions of a direct Opposition, an Opposition which would carefully criticise and examine every proposal brought forward by the Government, and likewise every act of administration requiring criticism or examination.

MR. JACOBY: You refused the opportunity.

MR. DAGLISH: This party at the present time is quite willing to take up the functions of an Opposition if occasion offer. The party is quite willing at any time to do so, and thereby furnish the State with a system of direct party government.

MR. JACOBY: What opportunity are you looking for?

MR. DAGLISH: I have fairly expressed my opinion on the matter. I regret the fact that whenever there is danger of the Government losing a division, even on trifling, unimportant matters, there should be a rush from the Opposition side. So soon as the danger is observed, there is an influx from the one side of the House to the other, in order that the Government may not be defeated. This is more particularly the case when proposals on which the Government stand in danger of losing come from this bench. Indeed, we now observe an instance of the sort. No doubt the Premier and the leader of the Opposition are at the present moment arranging that this happy state of affairs may continue. [The Premier then conferring with Mr. Pigott.] I think, however, it would have been more decent for those two members to wait until my remarks, at all events on this subject, have come to a pause. I notice amongst the omissions from the Governor's Speech a reference to old age pensions. I may remind the Premier that last session the House carried without a division a motion instructing the Government to bring forward some scheme with the object of providing those pensions at the earliest moment practicable. That moment might have been expected by some of us to arrive last session.

Certainly I do not think there is any reasonable excuse for omission during this session; and I hope that although old age pensions are not on the programme at present, the Government will, before the session expires, have matured some scheme for the purpose of dealing with the matter. Seeing that the House is absolutely unanimous on the subject, they need fear no difficulty in passing such a measure. I think the House is entitled to so much respect from the Government as to demand the fulfilment of the request which has been made. In this connection I had occasion, some two years ago, to draw attention to the condition of the Women's Home, which then was made a harbour for children of tender years, many of whom had the misfortune for a considerable period to listen to language which was certainly unfit for children to hear. That was remedied to a great extent; but even at present, I understand, children are occasionally received and retained for some weeks in that home, which is absolutely unsuitable for the purpose. I hope the Premier will find means of providing another refuge in which children may be retained until he is able to draft them to whatever institution it may be intended they should ultimately enter. In regard to the Women's Home, I should farther like to point out that although a home in name it is far from being a home in any other sense. There women who having lived respectable, honest, hard-working lives and have come to old age with absolutely no fault but poverty, are compelled frequently to herd with females of undesirable character, whose language is indeed painful to any respectable person to listen to. Inmates of the home are compelled to take their meals all together, and consequently the two classes are compelled to associate for some period during the day, at all events. The discipline of the place, too, is far from what it should be. Those inmates who give way to habits of drink have every opportunity of going out to get liquor, whereupon they return in a state of intoxication, which frequently results in abusiveness. There is a comparative lack of discipline in dealing with inmates for such offences. I should like the Premier to look into the whole matter, and see if he cannot make

some provision by which those women who are decent and respectable may be placed where they shall have some chance of happiness, or at all events of more comfort than they get in the existing establishment. We owe this much at least to those on whom misfortune has fallen or who have not been able to attain a comfortable position in life. In regard to local option, a motion was passed last session affirming that before any new licenses are granted, a poll should be taken in each locality where such licenses are sought, and that the decision of the majority should be binding upon the licensing bench. There is no mention of local option in the Speech before us, and I regret that this is a farther omission from the Government programme. I do not intend to labour this point, but I do hope the Premier will fulfil the promise given to the House last session by introducing a measure to deal with new licenses, at all events. I am not pressing for anything more than a measure dealing with new licenses at the present juncture. There may be some reason in the Premier's action, in withholding a Bill dealing with the licensing question until after the general election; but if this session is allowed to pass and nothing is done in regard to new licenses, then probably another period of three years will elapse without any provision of the sort being placed on our statute-book, and during that time the number of licensed houses will go on increasing in every direction in the State. The Premier should therefore give us an opportunity of referring to the people in the various localities the question of granting or refusing new licenses, thereby giving the opportunity of saying that if the people in a particular locality are against the granting of new licenses, no new licenses shall be granted in that locality, or if they want new licenses to be granted in a locality, they shall have the right of saying that such licenses should be granted. That is the only way to bring about a satisfactory solution of the present increase of licensed houses. In regard to the amendment of the Licensing Act, I should like to refer to the State hotel at Gwalia. I am absolutely in favour of the establishment of hotels conducted by the State, and I have watched with considerable interest (and a

desire to support the steps the Government have taken) the working of the experiment at Gwalia; but as far as my information goes, the Government have not proceeded on right lines in that instance. I believe the hotel at Gwalia is conducted on the same lines as a private hotel would be, and that instead of this State hotel being a place where the consumption of liquor is discouraged, I am told the consumption of liquor is just as much encouraged there as in any other hotel in the State.

**THE PREMIER:** In what way?

**MR. DAGLISH:** I believe that exactly the same facilities and the same temptations for drinking are offered at Gwalia as in any other hotel, and the desire of the manager of that hotel apparently is to make it a good business proposition, though I maintain that was not the principle on which the experiment was started. Therefore, I say that if the State hotel at Gwalia is not to be conducted differently from an ordinary public-house, there is no advantage in having a State-conducted hotel as compared with an hotel conducted by any private licensee. I consider that, as far as possible, the element of profit should be eliminated from the sale of liquor in a State hotel, and that there should be no unnecessary inducement offered to any customers to indulge unduly in drinking.

**MR. JOHNSON:** What would you offer them, tea and coffee?

**MR. TAYLOR:** What are the special inducements offered?

**MR. DAGLISH:** Attractive surroundings; first a palatial building, I might say unnecessarily over-furnished, together with all the adjuncts of the ordinary hotel are to be found there. I should like to know if I am wrongly informed on this matter.

**MR. TAYLOR:** You are wrongly informed.

**MR. DAGLISH:** I am glad to hear it, but I cannot help regretting that the Government have refused to listen to a proposal for appointing a board of advice which should superintend the management of the State hotel, so that the people of the State would be enabled to know that the experiment of State ownership was being tried on abso-

lutely fair and proper lines. My suggestion would be a board of three respectable citizens, one of whom at all events should represent total abstinence, one should be an ordinary business man, and the Government should appoint some respectable citizen as a third member, say a public servant if need be. [Several interjections.] I do not say this with any desire to hamper or criticise the Government in this matter, but I do so with the desire that any experiment made towards arriving at a solution of the liquor problem should be fairly carried out, and I am sure members on both sides of the House are desirous that this experiment should be fairly conducted. In regard to the settlement of people on the land, I am glad to learn that a great deal of progress is being made; but I should be better pleased if some step had been taken to settle the land on the people. I am not satisfied that at present the area under cultivation is anything like in due proportion to the area under alienation. The figures seem to imply exactly the opposite. I find that during the six months ending 30th June of this year, under "conditional purchases," under "free homestead farms," and "selections under Land Purchase Act," 329,060 acres were taken up; while in December, 1902, the total land alienated or in process of alienation for purposes of cultivation was 2,038,913 acres, making a total of nearly two and a-half million acres alienated or in process of alienation up to the end of June last. Turning to the head of "Land Settlement," I observe that the area under crop of various kinds in the season 1902-3 did not exceed a beggarly 228,118 acres, or a little more than 10 per cent. of the land then alienated or in process of alienation. These figures seem to me to carry a conviction that a great deal of the land alienated is going into the hands of private persons for speculative purposes; and it is much to be regretted if we are going into a policy of repurchasing large estates in order to take land from one private owner and hand it over as quickly as possible to another private owner. It would be more statesmanlike if we had some system of getting our land utilised on the leasehold plan—perpetual leasehold if necessary—and to make the hold-

ing conditional on its being improved; charging no rent, if necessary, for the first year or two while preliminary operations were being carried out. At present our one idea seems to be to alienate our land as fast as we can possibly do it. It is proposed from time to time to build railways in order to hasten the alienation of Crown lands. I should like to see the Crown lands put to their fullest use, and I should like to see our agricultural industry, the largest permanent industry in the State, brought to the highest condition of progress and development; but I do not think this rapid alienation of the Crown estate is at all essential to the progress of our agricultural industry. In regard to the construction of new railways, I observe that several are contemplated. Amongst these we have special reference to a line to be built from Collie to the Great Southern Railway, also a line from Fremantle to connect with the South-Western Railway. These two railways, we are told, will open up a large area of agricultural country; but, as far as my inquiries go, the great bulk of the land that will be passed through by the railway from Collie to the Great Southern line is already alienated.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** That is not so.

**THE PREMIER:** You are wrong.

**MR. DAGLISH:** Of course if I differ from the Premier, I always am wrong; but I venture to criticise all the same. Until we have a very much larger proportion of the land already taken up put to practical use than is the case at present, there is no necessity to extend our agricultural railways.

**MEMBER:** Not on the Pinjarra route.

**MR. DAGLISH:** I don't care which route is taken.

**THE PREMIER:** You do not believe in building railways until all the land along the route is alienated?

**MR. DAGLISH:** I do not believe in building agricultural railways for the purpose of alienating Crown lands. I want to prevent you from selling the land at all. I would like to see railways built through the Crown estate, and that estate retained by the Crown; but I do not think it is right that we should build railways which will

to a large extent improve private holdings, unless we get some compensation from the private owners. I do not think railways should be built through alienated land until we get some form of the betterment principle adopted; and I am not in favour of building branch agricultural lines to serve the interests of private owners under such circumstances as exist in the Great Southern Railway district, while large districts in many other parts of the State are without any railway at all. When we have constructed our main railways, then it will be time enough to build cockspur lines. The same remarks apply to the proposed line from Fremantle to junction with the South-Western Railway. I have not heard any justification particularly for the Jandakot line. Even the suggestion that it will enable people at Jandakot to get cheap road-metal for making roads in their district is not a sufficient justification. In regard to the Morgans-to-Laverton line, I do not think there can be two opinions in this House. That extension is absolutely essential to the progress of our mining industry in that district; and I venture to think that the Port Hedland to Pilbarra Railway is well worthy of consideration. I have not sufficient information to enable me to speak positively, but I do think that if the country likely to be opened up by that railway is half as good as it is represented to be by many persons who are old residents there, that district deserves as well as requires railway facilities. In regard to improving the Bunbury harbour for facilitating the shipping of timber, this House may well wait till it has the report of the Timber Commission before it, in order that members may be in possession of all the facts in regard to the timber industry, and be enabled to judge fairly as to the length of time that industry is likely to live. The fact that the Bunbury harbour so far has been a paying proposition in no way proves that the very large expenditure suggested by the Government would return interest and sinking fund on the principal to be expended. I should like to have seen some assurance that the Municipal Institutions Act will be amended. Last session the Roads Act was dealt with, and an amendment made which provided the option of a new form of valuation for rating pur-



poses. That new method has been largely availed of, and in fact it is significant that those districts where the keenest opposition was expected to the new principle of rating on unimproved land values have been the first to jump at the opportunity of using that alternative mode of valuation. Throughout the agricultural districts unimproved land valuation has been adopted, and also I am glad to see it has been adopted by the Perth Roads Board. I believe that if the same principle is made available in the municipalities by amendment of the Act, the same anxiety to adopt it will be seen on their part, and that a great benefit will accrue to the ordinary citizens of a municipality, to the man who invests his money by improving the various districts by building, as against the man who simply holds land for speculative purposes. I notice by the Premier's policy speech he intends to alter the allocation of the municipal subsidy, and that his proposition is to subsidise municipalities in accordance with the rate at which they tax themselves. This is to my mind a very praiseworthy departure, and one which I hope the Premier will persist in. At the same time, it is a departure which needs to be entered upon with some degree of caution, for the reason that whilst the Municipal Act lays down the precise mode of valuation on which the taxation is based, that Act is continually evaded, even in the principal city here, the city of Perth itself. The rules laid down by the Municipal Act with regard to making valuations are absolutely ignored. The consequence of this is that Perth, by making lower valuations than it is entitled to do under the Act, is charging, in order to receive its revenue, a nominally higher rate than it should; that is, it makes valuations low and its rate high for the purpose of simply cheating the Waterworks Board out of a certain share of the money to which it is entitled. The Waterworks Board levies a rate of 1s. in the £ on properties under its jurisdiction. It is bound to accept the values made by the various municipalities which it supplies with water. Therefore, if the municipalities make an unfairly low valuation, the Waterworks Board receives less than it should, whereas if the municipalities make fair values the board

receives its fair proportion of rate from them. The city of Perth has deliberately, as far as I am able to judge, kept its valuations low for the purpose of enabling its ratepayers to pay less than their fair proportion towards the funds of the Metropolitan Waterworks Board. The effect of this is that those persons who buy water by meter for lifts and other purposes, and those who live in municipalities outside the city of Perth, are paying higher for their water than they should, in order that Perth may continue to pay less than its share. I think that the Government, when it is deciding upon its subsidy, will have to see that the valuations, which are the basis of the rate, are first of all fair, or else it will be absolutely misled when it adopts the rating system. I will just give one illustration in support of the argument, which I may possibly not have made altogether clear. A certain property holder, who is likewise a member of Parliament, has two houses, one being in Perth and the other in Subiaco. They are both valued under the same Municipal Act, which lays down a distinct principle to guide the valuator. The house in Perth is let at £2 a week, and that in Subiaco at £1 7s. 6d. a week. The valuation, therefore, of the Subiaco house should be very considerably under that of the Perth house, as rent value is the basis of valuation according to the Municipal Act. As a matter of fact the house which produces £2 a week is valued in Perth at £40 a year, and the house which produces £1 7s. 6d. a week in Subiaco is valued at £45 a year. The occupier of the house which is let for £2 a week pays less for water than the occupier of the house in Subiaco which is let at £1 7s. 6d. This is an indication how the Minister may be misled, if he merely takes the rate in the pound without going into the question whether the valuations have been made fairly in accordance with the provisions of the Act. [Interjection.] The municipal rate which is required to bring in sufficient to meet the annual estimates has to be correspondingly high as the municipal valuation is low. I may say that another instance was furnished by a ratepayer who appealed.

MR. FOULKES: They think they pay enough.

MR. DAGLISH: Whether they think they are paying quite sufficient or not, the man who is paying by meter is got at every time under that system, and the municipalities who are drawing water under the same conditions and making fair valuations are likewise got at every time. With regard to another matter, which has now passed to the control of the Federal Government, that is the influx of Asiatics, I should like the Government to make some inquiry. I observe that during the present year 126 Asiatics have arrived each month, while about 36 have departed, the result being that in the five months which have elapsed we have had an increase of 450 to our Asiatic population. I should certainly like the Minister to make some inquiries into that subject with a view of finding out how it is possible that this can happen, if the Immigration Act is being efficiently administered.

MR. PIGOTT: Are you sure of your figures.

MR. DAGLISH: No, I am not. I took them from an abstract of the Statistical Department. I should like the Premier, if he will, to make some inquiry to ascertain beyond question whether that is the case. On that question, too, I may refer to the fact that these statistics, though very useful as far as they go, do not seem to me to be brought up to date, or as near to date as it should be possible to have them. Very often if one looks up statistics on any question he is compelled to handle what are after all but second-hand, some year or two in many instances behind the time. It is absolutely essential, if we are to get the value of our Statistical Department, to have a sufficient staff to keep the statistics up to date. In some instances of course, like land settlement and that sort of thing, where there is no possibility of delay, where the various departments furnish all the information to the Statistical Department, the information is available promptly; but the great bulk of our statistics are woefully behindhand, and I should like the Government to find out whether they can do something to make them available much earlier than they have been in the past. I note without surprise that the Government only purpose to partially adopt the report of the

Public Service Commission. I do not know whether it will be necessary to appoint a second commission to decide what suggestions shall be adopted and what shall not. I gather from the Governor's Speech that the whole of the recommendations are not to be adopted by the Government, but only such as are strictly applicable to local circumstances. With regard to this matter, I think still, as I have thought before, that the Government itself might have made some investigation which would have served the same purpose and have saved a great waste of public money. But at the same time I hope that if there are to be any reductions in the staffs of the various departments, the Government will be very slow in turning men adrift at a moment's notice, especially men who are unlikely to find other openings very quickly in this State. I know that at the present time there are working in the Government Savings Bank, at 6s. or 7s. a day, men who are skilled accountants. I was assured by the Treasurer that there are a number of these men doing comparatively subordinate work; men who have the very highest credentials as accountants. These men and others following clerical work as a means of livelihood may find it very difficult indeed to get positions at a moment's notice. I hope the Government will not turn a large number of them adrift at once, because if they do so it simply means that there will be a large rush from the State immediately afterwards, and the condition will practically be the same as it was in 1899, when Sir John Forrest wiped off the deficiency in the course of 12 months by simply dispensing with an enormous number of hands from the public service, the upshot of it being a general loss of confidence all round. I think that the Government might well extend its retrenchment over a fair period of time by refusing to fill vacancies. If they adopt the policy of at once weeding out a large number of public servants, then the putting-in process will begin again immediately. It did begin again immediately in 1899.

MR. TAYLOR: It is still going on.

MR. DAGLISH: We find the result in the report of the Public Service Commission. I hope that when vacancies occur in one department which is under-

manned, the Government will fill them by transferring officers from an overmanned department. I was very glad to see the high value the Commission placed on the services of the chairman of the Board of Public Health. I thought it was one of the most valuable features in the report of the Commission—the unanimity with which the Commission recommended that the salary of that officer should be raised, and I think it is more gratifying to find that during the past few years we have had a gentleman filling such an important position at far less than its value, if we accept the report and the assessment of the Public Service Commission. With regard to the question of hospitals, it is proposed by the Government to institute some system of local taxation. I do not know what system this will be, and perhaps it is premature to refer to the subject at all. I should like, however, to put on record my belief that the hospitals should be kept up at the expense of the public purse. I think that every district where a hospital is necessary should be provided with one without any local charge whatever. Hospitals are a class of institution which should be kept up at the cost of the whole population: I do not care whether they exist in Perth or in any other part of the State. I likewise object, and strongly object, to what are called charity movements, which consist very often in sending young girls—I was going to say possibly old girls in some cases—out into the streets to beg the various passers-by to give something for the benefit of charity. I think the charities of the State should be conducted by the State itself, and that if there is in the State sufficient money, as undoubtedly is the case, to provide for them, it is much better that the cost should be taken from the whole of the State than that any of it should be raised by what are called collections, but what very often amounts to absolute demands made upon private individuals. I hope that we shall have a Session which will be pleasing to ourselves and above all useful to the State, and that members of the House will be able to work in harmony one with the other, yet without any sacrifice of principle at any time on either side.

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Williams): I join with other members in congratulating

the State on the appointment of Admiral Sir Frederick Bedford to the high position of Governor. Notwithstanding occasional expressions of opinion that the position of Governor is not a necessity, I trust that during the whole of my lifetime I shall not see a departure from the system which now obtains. I re-echo the sentiments expressed in regard to yourself, Mr. Speaker, and I am indeed pleased to see you again take up that position in this House which you have so long and so honourably filled. In common with other members, I trust that you may long be spared to enjoy good health and to preside over the business of this Chamber. Although many matters are touched on in the Speech which His Excellency has been pleased to deliver, there are others which have not received notice. To-day I shall content myself with briefly referring to the omissions, but even at the risk of taking up a little of the time of the House I shall have to deal with matters which have been touched on. In spite of the objections raised against allusion to the important question of closer trade relations with the mother country, I will say that I am indeed pleased that the matter has been raised; because I consider that a great deal depends upon the future connection of Great Britain with her colonies. In my opinion, closer trade relations between the mother country and the colonies will prove a success. The question is not altogether a new one, for it has undoubtedly received in the past the earnest attention of men who take a deep interest in the welfare of the Empire. In this connection I may refer to certain remarks made by the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain six or seven years ago. Even at that time he caused some measure of public attention to be directed to the question of trade relations between Great Britain and her colonies. It may be well to quote an extract from a speech made by the right honourable gentleman on the 9th June, 1896, at a congress of chambers of commerce of the Empire, held in London:—

No one nowadays, in this country or outside of it, denies the enormous benefit it would be to the British race throughout the Empire if we could arrange some union which would lead to closer relations, and which would retain within the Empire, and for the benefit of the Empire, the trade and the subjects now

diverted to foreign lands; but up to the present time we have not been agreed as to the methods by which this object may be reached.

I admit that, if I understand it correctly, I find the germs of such a proposal in a resolution which is to be submitted to you on behalf of the Toronto Board of Trade. What is that resolution? Again I say I hope that I am correctly explaining it. That resolution I understand to be one for the creation of a British Zollverein or Customs Union, and would establish at once practically free-trade throughout the British Empire, but would leave the separate contracting parties free to make their own arrangements with regard to duties on foreign goods, except that this is an essential condition of the proposal, that Great Britain shall consent to place moderate duties upon certain articles which are of large production in the colonies. Now, if I have rightly understood it, these articles would comprise corn, meat, wool, and sugar, and perhaps other articles of enormous consumption in this country, which are at present largely produced in the colonies and wholly produced by British labour. On the other hand, as I have said, the colonies, while maintaining their duties upon foreign importations, would agree to a free interchange of commodities with the rest of the Empire, and would cease to place protective duties on any product of British labour. That is the principle of the German Zollverein, that is the principle which underlies federation in the United States of America; and I do not doubt for a moment that if it were adopted it would be the strongest bond of union between the British race throughout the world. I say that such a proposal as that might commend itself even to an orthodox free-trader. It would be the greatest advance that free-trade has ever made since it was first advocated by Mr. Cobden, since it would extend its doctrines permanently to more than 300,000,000 of the human race, and to communities many of which are the most prosperous, the most thriving, and the most rapidly increasing in the world; and, on the other hand, it would open up to the colonies an almost unlimited market for their agricultural and other productions.

Those words show that this great question had been seriously thought out. Since then it has been found that the German race, with its wonderful enterprise, has endeavoured to wrest from Great Britain the trade which properly belongs to her; and the United States of America have made a similar attempt. Accordingly, those who take an interest in the well-being of the British Empire, recognising the necessity for the supremacy of Great Britain, consider it their duty to examine carefully into the question of closer trade relations. The matter certainly opens up many avenues for thought, and no

doubt it is beset with numerous difficulties. The adoption of such a system as that indicated will probably convulse the British communities; even more so, perhaps, than the introduction of the Reform Bill in Cobden's days. Yet we must face the question, and I take it that when an answer is arrived at the result will be to the advantage of Britain and her colonies, and will tend to the firmer consolidation of the Empire. No doubt the subject of railway communication between Western Australia and the Eastern States should receive attention at the hands of the Government, yet I certainly consider that it is premature to ask this Parliament to consider a Bill providing for the construction of any portion of that railway. I am not surprised at the opposition shown by our South Australian friends towards the construction of the Transcontinental Railway. Sir John Forrest, in speaking on this subject in the Commonwealth Parliament a few weeks ago, alluded to a remark I made here in 1899, being interviewed on my return from Adelaide. At that time I expressed the opinion, based on remarks made to me by prominent South Australians, that Western Australia was not likely to obtain so much support from the neighbouring State as Sir John Forrest and certain members of the South Australian Government expected would be given us. I came to that conclusion because I had heard free expression of the view that the Transcontinental Railway would not conduce to the advantage of South Australia, and that it would rather tend to benefit Western Australia. I hold the opinion—an opinion which I expressed at that time—that South Australia had all to gain and nothing to lose then, because we then were not in a position to compete successfully with South Australian products. We have gained ground since, and we are still gradually gaining ground in that direction. I feel, therefore, that the competition which would follow on the construction of such a line is not so much to be feared by Western Australian producers at the present time. A few years ago the building of the line certainly was entirely to the interest of South Australia. There is not the slightest doubt, seeing the comparatively short distance separating the Kalgoorlie gold-

fields from the producing districts of South Australia, that a good deal of trade would have followed in the wake of the line. My forecast, to which I have previously alluded, has now been verified by the action of prominent statesmen and leading commercial people in South Australia. I may remark that I have previously contended that a line should be built to Kalgoorlie on the 4ft. 8½ in. gauge. However, with the advance of railway engineering and the advantages derivable from improved engines and heavier rails, greater speed can be accomplished on a 3ft. 6in. gauge than was possible three or four years ago. Therefore it has now become a serious question whether we should depart from the existing gauge. I hope the matter will be fully considered before we commit ourselves to so grave a step as a break of gauge. Perhaps on looking into the matter the Government will see that their proposal, although designed in the best interests of the State, is premature, and that we should await farther developments before, as a Parliament, committing ourselves to the laying of a broad-gauge track. As regards the Coolgardie Water Scheme, no one is more pleased than myself that this great work has been brought to a successful issue. Started as it was during my administration, I took the greatest interest in it during my whole term of office. I am glad indeed that the present Government have accomplished the work, and that fresh water can be plentifully supplied on the fields. I am strongly of opinion, as I have always been, that the scheme will be of immense benefit to the residents of those dry regions, the Kalgoorlie fields. Here, I desire to point out that although this year's rainfall has been one of the heaviest ever known on the fields, the residents of the district must not run away with the idea that such a wet season is likely to be frequently repeated. My experience of those dry areas, over which I travelled some 30 years ago, enables me to say that last year's is the heaviest rainfall known during 25 years. My own district is feeling the benefit of the rains. The work of the farmers has been stopped by heavy downpours, which usually pass over the Eastern Goldfields. I desire to warn Goldfields residents not to run away with the idea that similar

seasons are likely to occur at even moderate intervals. I have not the slightest doubt that the great scheme will be of the utmost advantage to the fields. As regards the charges for the water, I consider that they should not be fixed very high. A moderate charge should be imposed. I still hold to the opinion that the charge contemplated by the originators of the scheme, 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons delivered in the goldfields reservoirs, with a reasonable allowance for cost of distribution, is the proper charge. In such circumstances I believe that in a short time we shall find goldfields consumers taking a very large quantity of water indeed. The revenue may not be sufficient to pay for the whole working cost of the scheme and interest and sinking fund, and any deficiency between revenue and outgoings should be borne by the State, pending the scheme becoming a self-paying concern, as I am confident it will become in a short time. In passing, I may express regret that the member for York (Mr. Burges) made use of the word "unworthy" in relation to goldfields residents. I know the hon. member's broad-minded habit of thought, and I am sure that he did not intend to use the word in its literal sense. No doubt he with many others, who have had to put up with almost as many hardships as have the goldfields people, fail to see what reason there should be for complaint, or for a refusal to pay the price of water used. After all, some allowance must be made for remarks which have been made from time to time; and I certainly recommend the Government to meet the consumer as far as is reasonably possible. In regard to the Royal Commission on the Public Service, I consider that the Commission should never have been appointed. Although it did not emanate from the present Government, who have inherited it, the Commission having been appointed by their predecessors, yet the present Government could have recalled the Commission, and should have undertaken the reorganisation of the service. That reorganisation could have been more successfully carried out by departmental officers; and if so undertaken, we would have saved a great deal of money to the State, and more reasonable proposals would have been presented to Parliament, while better results would have been

obtained than from the present expensive Commission. No doubt it has been an unpleasant duty for those commissioners, and I do not complain of the way they have carried out their work. At the same time I consider it was a mistake to introduce two gentlemen from the Eastern States, and to appoint them together with a gentleman from this State. No doubt the latter may be an energetic officer; but I do not think he had sufficient knowledge of our requirements, nor had the two gentlemen from the other States; with the result that we have not had such a report as we ought to have had. The report placed before us deals with many of the outlying districts; but the cursory examination made in these places was not sufficient to enable the commissioners to arrive at a fair understanding of the requirements of many of our rising and important centres. There has also been a serious delay. If the Government had undertaken this work of reorganisation in 1902, it would have been completed by the present time; whereas after the Commission has been sitting for a year, we are very little farther forward, and there is a prospect of another six months elapsing before there will be an entire reorganisation; with the result that we shall have had to wait 18 months for the carrying out of a work which could have been successfully accomplished by an energetic Minister in three or four months. One subject not alluded to is immigration. I have heard remarks, especially from one of the Labour members, with regard to the influx of people into this State; suggesting that something should be done to deter men from coming here because the avenues of employment are fully taken up. I quite agree with the Premier on this matter; for surely we in this State are not in such a condition to-day that we cannot find employment for those who come here. We have a large country, with everything progressing; and although there may be some temporary unemployed difficulty, still we find that labour has been absorbed and we see matters going on progressively; so that it would be a great mistake to say there is no room for more workers in this State. There is no doubt some difficulty in regard to the ordinary labourer who comes here with his pair of

hands as his only capital, and without enough means perhaps to take him on to the goldfields. No doubt he sometimes finds it difficult to obtain employment; and something should be done to enable him to get work. The class of settler we want is the settler who will go on the land. He should be helped in doing so by the same means as are used to promote settlement in other parts of the world. We know that Canada has been most successful in opening up her lands and settling people on them; but at the same time we are not in the same position as Canada in attracting settlers, because Canada is comparatively near to the populous countries of Europe and can be reached in a short time by fast lines of steamships at low rates of passage. If a proper course were taken to advertise our advantages and to send out agents—not the ordinary lecturer, but men who understand the conditions of farming in this State, we should probably find immigrants ready to come here with a little capital to start on the land. The Government should take such steps as will induce such settlers to come to this State. We cannot find fault with recent immigration. It has been rapid in connection with our land settlement, and a most desirable class of people have been coming here from the Eastern States; but we cannot adopt the same course as Canada has taken in regard to the old world, for we cannot send our agents to the other States for inducing settlers to come here, as that might be regarded as an unfriendly action. Still, a good deal could be done by other means that may be legitimate and fair to make known our advantages, and induce people to settle on the lands of the State. In regard to the Constitution Bill and the Electoral Bill, which are now before the House, these will require the gravest consideration on our part. I have not looked through these Bills, but probably they are in the main the same as those introduced and passed in this House last Session. Although the Bills are not new, they will still require careful consideration. The conditions have altered somewhat in regard to the number of members. I am still of opinion that there should not be a material reduction in the number of members for the Assembly, because the growing capa-

bilities of the State demand that we should have representation for all the different parts of the State. Our interests are so scattered that our position is dissimilar to those of more thickly populated centres, and we require representation for our various industries, especially those which are far from the seat of government. In regard to the extension of railways, the proposals of the Government are in a right direction; but I would have been better pleased to have seen a more definite attitude in regard to this matter. One proposal is to construct a railway from Collie to a point on the Great Southern Railway; and the Speech mentions that this is for opening up agricultural lands for settlement. I always understood that such a railway was for conveying coal towards the goldfields, and that it would serve the agricultural areas through which it would pass. No doubt we shall receive more information on the point as the Government are making farther inquiries, and are no doubt prompted by a desire to do their best in the interest of that portion of the State. But if this railway is to be the success we all hope it will be, the Government should not lose sight of the dual purpose of carrying coal, and at the same time increasing the products of agriculture. It is proposed to build another line to open up that small but important settlement of Jandakot, which is a good garden district, though not a district likely to produce cereals, but suited for producing vegetables and fruit, particularly vegetables, in abundance. I believe in building such railways where it can be done very cheaply; and when these matters are being dealt with by the Minister for Railways, he should carefully consider the possibility of cheapening the cost of agricultural railways. Such lines might be built on the present gauge, with light rails taken from our present system when removed for replacing with heavier rails, and without expensive stations and sidings such as are pressed for in every district, often unreasonably, by people through whose land the line passes. Such lines would be a great advantage, and with the firmness of purpose possessed by the present Minister, I hope we shall probably see within a few years such lines of railway built similar to the light

lines constructed through timber-cutting areas. If such lines could be built throughout the agricultural districts at a cost of £650 a mile without the rails, as mentioned by the member for Welling-ton the other evening, these lines would be cheaper feeders for the main lines of railway than the cost of making roads. I know the difficulty which a Minister for Railways has to face in regard to the question of building light railways. I had experience of that difficulty in regard to the Goomalling district, where we attempted to build a similar line. I had made arrangements for carrying out that work; but after I left office I found that line was fully ballasted, and that numerous additions were made which must have added materially to the cost. Parliament should support any Minister who is prepared to construct railways on this principle; and then I think we shall get feeders built in various parts of the country suitable for their requirements, and at a very moderate cost. In regard to the Bunbury harbour, the farther improvements now proposed prove that those who were instrumental in the earlier work at that port were fully justified in the action they took. We believed that Bunbury would become one of the most important ports between Albany and Fremantle, and the great timber-shipping trade has proved that the money devoted to the place has been well spent, and that the farther expenditure now proposed is fully warranted. In regard to the carriage of foodstuffs to the goldfields, I notice that the Government propose to make a farther reduction in the railway freights. I am glad to see that they are considering this matter. I would point out that it is a difficult question to deal with, and one that can be dealt with only by an alteration of the freight classes. The present A class is low enough; but there is ground for reducing some articles in the first-class to the A class, and have only the second-class and the A class. By this means you would arrive at a fairly equitable solution of the difficulty. But they should so arrange the reductions that the consumer and not the trader shall get the benefit of them. The present rate on A class is 34s. 3d. per ton, or 18d. (about three-sixteenths of 1d.) per pound. If you were to reduce

that rate, I am afraid the consumers would not get any benefit. As one of the producers, and one also who does a very large business in those lines which are carried under this class, I may say we would be the people who would benefit very considerably by any reduction in that class; because how are we to divide three-sixteenths of a penny? We are not able to do so, even if so inclined, except in the case of large quantities, and it is not large quantities which we are dealing with when the consumer comes into the question. Therefore I take it where we should make some reduction is in the other classes, where the rate is £5 0s. 10d. per ton, which means a little over  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. Upon tinned goods and various things carried, a reduction of  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. could very reasonably be made, which upon a 4lb. tin of anything would mean a matter of 1d. which the consumer would get. If we come to look into the question of reduction of rates it is a matter which should be considered very closely, because after all we are likely to give away a very large sum without affording any advantage to the consumer. With regard to the reduction of the duty on meat, it is in the memory of members that some traders boasted that they put the whole of the duty into their pockets. They did not press, perhaps, for the reduction, but the consumer pressed for it. The traders were not here to say, "Don't do it." It was done, and the consequence was that the traders received the benefit, and not the consumers. There is one thing I should like to clear up, if hon. members will listen to me for a few moments, with reference to the question of preferential rates. If there is one question which has caused more trouble than anything else on the goldfields, with the exception perhaps of the 10-foot drop and a few other things which were so evident in our administration, it is this question of preferential rates. It is a mere bogey after all, and I have said many times it would have paid this country over and over again to have a commission to inquire into the question of preferential rates, and see how far-reaching they were in their ill effects as mentioned by people on the goldfields. The items are very few. I was not instrumental in putting the items in. They existed in 1896, when I took

the department over. They were in the old rate book of 1895. I did not strike them out in 1898, when I amended the regulations, because they did not mean much. I said they meant nothing to the consumer, but they would have removed an endless trouble. What are they? Dairy produce, dripping, preserved fruits and vegetables, jam and tomato sauce, vinegar and wine. These are the whole of the things enumerated. With the exception of slop goods, these are the only things mentioned from time to time. Why did they come in? They came in because we were trying to foster a factory at Fremantle. I believe it was in the old time when an effort was made to induce people to produce jam, tomato sauce, and other things of local manufacture. They were put in at that time, and unfortunately they were not taken out.

MEMBER: What about dairy produce?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: That was for the same purpose—to benefit the people in the South-West. These are the things they complain of so much. What is there, after all, in this question of preferential rates? Take, for instance, a ton of flour, which was complained of and which was the first item on the list. It comes to 34s. 3d. to carry it from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie, a distance of 387 miles. The local article will cost 32s. 6d. That is a difference of 1s. 9d. Are we to quarrel with these people over 1s. 9d.? I say no. I would have knocked that off long ago, but I had not a chance of revising the rates at the time. I think these may be wiped out almost at once when the matter comes before the present Minister at the time he is dealing with the revision of food duties. As to the other (what may be termed) preferential rates which were mentioned by the Premier when speaking some time ago—that is the difference in regard to the rates on what may be termed purely agricultural produce—that difference does not cost the people on the goldfields a farthing. It was only put on for the purpose of encouraging people in distant places to convey their goods at something like a fair competitive rate as against the persons resident at more advantageous spots near to the goldfields market. It was done for the purpose of encouraging people three or four hundred miles away



from those districts. It did not cost the consumer any more; in fact it enabled him really to get the goods much lower, because goods were brought into the line of competition from those more distant places. Therefore I say it is one of those questions which have to be looked into with a view to some sort of modification of the conditions, to remove a complaint which, upon its being looked into, will be found to be foundationless, after all. There was nothing in it, and the question should certainly receive the attention of the Government later on. I was surprised to find that Sir William Lyne almost indorsed the opinion of the fields, and said that it was a monstrous thing that a preferential rate should be given as against the imported article. It is a very small thing: it is only a matter of 1s. 9d., which should never have been allowed to continue. At the same time I think that where any consideration can be given to any industry it should be given, provided that we do not increase the cost to the consumer. If the State is prepared to give a little out of revenue, as it were, by way of rebate, then I say there should be no fault found with the State for doing that when it encourages an important industry. In regard to the question of education, I may say that I am not in accord with the proposal of the Government in relation to secondary schools. I think that our present system of education, from the primary standpoint, is sufficient for the requirements of our people; in fact I say that in some directions we are over-educating. In regard to what may be termed useful subjects I am a believer in good education. I think we cannot do too much in the direction of educating our youth to take their positions in the different spheres of life to which they are called. But there are so many subjects taken up now, some of which may be very well dispensed with, and I think it is well worthy the consideration of the Government, if we are to adopt some system of what may be termed technical education in a measure, as to whether we cannot adopt in the country districts a little agricultural education in addition to the ordinary standard education. This has been followed out by some of the teachers with very successful results, and it does not require much to

do it. The few standard works are easily availed of, and instruction as to the benefits of the various manures which are used, the methods of treatment, and that kind of thing, can be very successfully carried on without much expense to the State. That is in some sense technical education, but in some parts—say, for instance, the city—you would not require so much; while out in the country, where you have the area near your school, it may be made use of. I hope when the education question comes on to place before the House a more comprehensive suggestion with regard to this matter. In relation to the proposed University, I am in accord with the Government in that direction. I hope every means will be taken by the Government to provide for what may be a future university in this State. I am sure those who have looked fully into this question will see that a great deal of good has resulted from the university training both in America and in Germany. Of course we know that in the old country there have been good results, but more practical results have followed from the efforts of both the Americans and the Germans. We have only to look at what they have done in that direction to see that with regard to their chemistry training they have spared no pains, and in the big manufactures in the different parts of Germany and various parts of America, the scientific training which those who are engaged in that work have gained at the various universities has been of great help in enabling the employers to farther the interests of the various industries. I need only just refer to one note which I have here in connection with what America does in this direction to show you what an important part universities have played in building up the great trade of that wonderful country. Principal Remsen, of John Hopkins University, U.S.A., speaking on the value of university work says:—

The material value of the work carried on in the University laboratories cannot be over-estimated. New industries are constantly springing up on the basis of such work. A direct connection has been shown to exist between the industrial condition of a country and the attitude of the country towards University work. It is generally accepted that the reason why Germany occupies such a high

position in certain branches of industry, especially those founded on chemistry, is that the Universities of Germany have fostered the work of investigation more than those of any other country. *What I want to make clear is that Universities are not luxuries, to be used or not as we may please. They are necessities. Their work lies at the very foundation of national well-being.*

Then we find one of our English professors, A. R. Forsyth, F.R.S., Sadlerian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University, says:—

It is the same in Germany. There, neither the State nor the individual has the least inclination to be parsimonious on the subject of University provision; on the contrary, they are lavish in such matters, realising that the best intellectual equipment and professional training constitute the best preparation for getting the utmost out of the powers of their men and the resources of the country. And I think that the extraordinary progress which has been made by Germany in the last thirty or forty years is largely due to the generosity with which the highest education has been fostered in every direction.

I think this proves we shall be on the right course in adopting in the future a University. And when it is established let it be upon the best lines. Do not let it be starved, because that is one of the greatest mistakes we can make, and as an agriculturist I may say that science is to-day playing a most important part in assisting the agriculturist to produce cereals from the land—in fact, producing everything the land will grow. We have seen amazing results come from the application of infinitesimal proportions of manure in the shape of phosphates. These, of course, are well known throughout the old world. They are coming very much into use in Australia. We have only been using them during the last few years. But what are they? They are the outcome of research, the outcome of the efforts of men who have gone into the subject, not as agriculturists, but as men of science, men who probably had nothing to do with growing a potato or a grain of wheat, but men who from their laboratory and study of chemistry have done all this to enable us as farmers to make the land produce much more than it would otherwise do, thus proving that science, not only in agriculture but in every other direction, plays a most important part in helping to build up industries of the State. I wish the project well, and I trust the

Government will take steps to make good provision for the endowment of a University. Secondary schools, in my opinion, are not required for the time being. Our primary schools are excellent; we are giving an education second to none in Australia; and with such advantages, I take it, that we need not at present worry ourselves about secondary education. In the matter of State management of hospitals, I am in accord with the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish). I consider that the State does good work in assisting to support such institutions. The country is new, and the people are going out into the wilds to help to build up the State. Were it not for the energy and determination displayed by the men who pioneer goldfields, who make their way into timber forests, who settle on agricultural lands and on pastoral country, we in Perth should not be thriving as we are to-day. The efforts of those men have built up Perth and our other towns. Take those men away, and the people of Perth and other centres would have to leave. Therefore the State should recognise its duty towards those who are building up industries. Let us understand, before a proposal for any change is made, that the State will continue for some time, at any rate until the people themselves are able to do more, to help the various hospitals. The duty is one which the State should perform with liberality. The question of the Midland Railway has cropped up from time to time, and no doubt it will arise during this Session. Notwithstanding the fact that settlement has not advanced in the Midland districts equally with other parts of the State, I consider that the Midland Railway Company is not altogether to blame. That company consists of people who have a business concern, namely a railway running through this State. The railway is doing good service, its working involves no cost to the State, and its administration is so economical as to afford a model to the management of the Government railways. The Midland people, it seems, are doing all they are bound to do under the conditions of their agreement. One of the conditions of that agreement was that the State should give the company for every mile of railway built 12,000 acres of land. The land has been granted to the company; and the

company has not done as well with it, admittedly, as might have been the case. Yet, I hold that to take what might be termed arbitrary means of bringing the Midland people to their bearings, as it were forcing them to do what they are not inclined to do, would be to depart from the line of fairness in a manner no business man would ever dream of doing. And in this instance the State stands in the position of a business man. Certainly the duty of the Government is to safeguard the interests of the country, but in their zeal to do what may be right for the State, Ministers must not act unfairly towards the company. The Midland people are there, no doubt, to sell their line at the best price they can get. The State had an opportunity of purchasing the railway at one time, but unfortunately did not take advantage of the opportunity. Since that date the value of the Midland line has increased, no doubt consequent on the progress of the State; and, therefore, the Midland people, like any business man or any person whatsoever with something to sell, raises its price in proportion to the rise in value. Our business, as a community, is now to make the best bargain we can. I certainly have no desire to see the State imposed upon where it can possibly be avoided.

MR. DAGLISH: Let us tax the Midland Company, and so get the value of our improvements.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: I am willing to tax them, provided the tax is made general.

MR. DAGLISH: Hear, hear; with pleasure.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Under certain conditions, I am by no means opposed to land taxation. I am not opposed to a land tax falling on owners absent from the State. People who take up land and do not work it, but simply wait for what is termed, in the old phrase, unearned increment, are to be avoided; moreover, lands held in this State by various people ought certainly to be brought into use. I may give the House an instance of appreciation through unearned increment which came under my notice. Fourteen years ago a man stepped out of the train at a station on the Great Southern Railway and made application for 1,000 acres adjoining a block held by me.

Since that time I have cleared the whole of my block, which comprises 800 acres, and have spent £9,000 on it. The person I refer to has never set foot on his land from the day he took it up, 14 years ago. He simply went back to London, and continued to hold the land; and recently it was sold at 30s. per acre, having been bought at 12s. The price shows 5 per cent. compound interest on the original cost. The former owner had not done a stroke on the land, and had not even fenced it. Such people ought to be made do something with their land, or else they should be taxed. I am ready to take action in that direction at any time. But I say let us be reasonable, and do not let us defeat our own object. Those who buy land should be compelled to improve it, but I recognise that we must not drive away capital. People who take up land, although we may think that they will not develop it, frequently do develop it later. We wish to encourage investment in that direction, because it adds to the wealth of the State. Undoubtedly, however, there is strong reason for finding fault with a man who leaves his land lying idle for a period of 10 or 15 years, making no effort to improve it and avoiding State taxes and road board rates. The last purchaser of the block I refer to pays £9 a year in road board rates, but the absentee owner escaped even those. Let us be fair to the Midland Railway Company, while we drive the hardest bargain we can. If the company proposes—I understand such an intention has been expressed—to divide its railway from its lands, then let those lands be subject to an absentee tax. I feel that, on the whole, good work has been done during the past year by the Government. The many omissions from the Speech it would take too long to deal with, and other opportunities will arise. The indefiniteness of the Speech in many respects leaves room for the drawing of various conclusions. I cannot refrain from expressing my satisfaction at the appointment of the latest addition to the Ministry. I refer to the Minister for Lands, Mr. Hopkins: in him we have a gentleman who certainly has shown a great desire to do his work in a thorough manner. The new Minister has taken the opportunity of travelling through a great portion of the State; and I congratulate him, and the Govern-

ment too, on the efforts put forward in that direction. Allusion has been made to Ministerial travels throughout the State; but those travels were undoubtedly necessary for the purpose of gaining information. Allusion has been made to the adoption of that method of gaining information by present Ministers, as compared with what has been termed the inaction of previous Ministers. On this point I desire to say that former Ministers also took the opportunity of visiting various parts of the State. If in certain cases they did not take that opportunity, it was because they were men who already knew the State thoroughly well. I mention these circumstances merely because I desire it to be thoroughly understood that I am in accord with the methods adopted by the present Government of travelling to gain information. I feel assured that the information gained will be of vast advantage to the State. Let us hope that as a result of the journeyings of the Minister for Lands we shall see such modifications and amendments of the Land Act as will conduce to increased settlement. Among the matters which will come within the purview of the Minister for Lands I desire to draw his particular attention to the Agricultural Bank Act, which seems to me to stand in need of some amendment. I refer especially to the matter of loans. Under the existing law a loan may be granted for the purpose of paying off a debt owing, say to a bank or another financial institution. In making application for a loan to repay an advance of £200, however, the applicant must ask for £300. One third of that amount has then to be spent on improvements.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** That is, assuming the land is worth it.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** An applicant will get only two-thirds of the amount of the advance.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** That is so.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** The applicant must ask for £300 in order that he may repay a loan of £200. Now, there is nothing in the Act, nor can the Manager of the Agricultural Bank insure, that the extra £100 shall be expended in improvements. The applicant may say that he is going to spend the extra hundred in improvements; but once he gets the money he may not do so.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** That is looked after.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** I know this subject better than the Minister does. The danger is one to which I have previously drawn attention. I have always maintained that once the original intention of the Agricultural Bank Act is departed from, namely to make the borrower do half the improvements with his own money, we are on dangerous ground. For the farmer, generally speaking, I have the very highest esteem; but, after all, one needs to be careful, particularly in lending money. The great majority of men are thoroughly straight and honest in their intentions and dealings, but every class contains a few who, even though they may originally be actuated by the best of intentions, do not always carry those intentions into effect. I trust, therefore, that the Minister will look into this phase of the matter at the earliest opportunity. The other subjects to which I should have liked to refer I shall leave to a future occasion. My great desire, as a member of the House, is to do my utmost for the advancement of the State. I shall assist the Government as far as I can; but, at the same time, I am ready at any moment, if need be, to cast a vote in direct opposition to them should I consider it in the interests of the State to do so.

At 6:30, the **SPEAKER** left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

**MR. J. J. HOLMES (East Fremantle):** Before I proceed to make a few remarks in connection with the Governor's Speech, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, upon your restoration to health, and with the hope that you will be long spared to watch over the proceedings of this House in the manner in which you have hitherto so faithfully discharged the duties appertaining to your high office. I am sure that I am only expressing the wishes of every member when I say that I hope you may be long spared to fulfil those duties. I am pleased to note that portion of the Speech before us which refers to the prosperity of the State, for I think we have every reason to be proud of the progress which Western Australia is making, and that the good season we

are being favoured with will do a great deal towards increasing that prosperity. While the mining industry is of great importance, in fact at the present day perhaps the industry of greatest importance in the State, nevertheless we cannot overlook the fact that when you take the gold from the ground you lessen the value of the mineral deposit, while the improvements made in agricultural and pastoral land increase the value of the land and increase the wealth of the country. I look forward to the time, though perhaps far distant, when the agricultural and pastoral industries will take a far more prominent place in the State than they do at present. The Premier this afternoon was questioned as to a statement he made in the Town Hall of Perth in connection with the want of population in the State. I entirely agreed with the Premier in the remarks he made; and I have no hesitation in saying that it is population we want in this State, and population principally on the land. It is idle to say we have overstocked, as it were, the labour market, because there is ample room for hundreds and thousands of people in this State if they would go out and work on the land, and certainly they cannot expect much luxury at the start. They must expect to do as others have done by taking what is offering, and seizing every opportunity to better their position. There is ample opportunity for men to come here, and if they will assist in our prosperity they should be principally located on the land. With reference to the Transcontinental Railway, I am afraid we will make a mistake if we offer terms to build the line. It is a big undertaking for this State; and while admitting there is necessity for free intercourse with our friends in the East, yet it becomes a question of what price we can afford to pay to bring them into closer touch with ourselves. To my mind the conditions of building the Transcontinental Railway and other conditions we impose should be imposed before the contract is completed. As an undoubted federalist, I say we have lived to see that it would have been better for Western Australia to have imposed conditions and federated afterwards. We cannot overcome the difficulties we are meeting with in the Eastern States, particularly in

South Australia, until we prove to them that it is in their interest to federate with Western Australia. When we do so, and I honestly hope we may see it at an early date, and when we prove it we shall then see the federal spirit develop almost immediately; but until they are led to believe and it is shown clearly that it is to their advantage to federate with us, we cannot expect much assistance from them. It is evident to anyone who gives consideration to the matter that as we have a large consuming population on our Eastern Goldfields to be supplied with the necessities of life, a population principally engaged in the mines, and when we realise that by the Transcontinental Railway the people in other States can be brought into touch with the large consuming population in Western Australia, it will be to their advantage to take a prominent part in connecting South Australia with Western Australia. Then we can look forward to the construction of that railway on terms and conditions satisfactory to ourselves. While this is a work of necessity, there are many more important entirely local works that might well engage the attention of the Government. One of the most important at the present juncture is the construction of a dock at Fremantle. Hon. members who have not been in the House as long as I have perhaps do not know that in 1896 a Loan Act was passed which included an item of £142,000 for the construction of a dock at Fremantle. In 1897, a Reappropriation Bill was brought down, and £70,000 of that amount was reappropriated for some other purpose. Again, in 1898 another Reappropriation Bill was brought down, and £35,000 was allocated for some other purpose. Since that time, little has been done towards the construction of a dock at Fremantle. We have repeated instances of vessels visiting the port of Fremantle, not bound for that port but putting in there in distress to be repaired; and if docking facilities were available, a considerable sum of money would be expended in repairs. Take for example the mishap that attended the steamer *Sultan* on the North-West coast a few weeks ago. That vessel has been tied up for weeks past to be towed back to Singapore, and perhaps £5,000 or £6,000 will be expended in repairs. This is work

that really belongs to this State, and should be carried out at Fremantle; but no provision has been made, although money was voted for the purpose in 1896. When that Reappropriation Bill came down, we who were then on the Opposition side charged the member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse), who was then in office, with stealing the money. It becomes the duty of someone else to repay this money, and I hope my friend the present Treasurer (Hon. J. Gardiner), who has done so much good work, will take an opportunity of repaying the money that was stolen from the dock vote by his predecessors, and will see that the work is put in hand; and that not only may we look forward to the early completion of that work, but that it will be satisfactory when done. Another matter which deserves the attention of the Government is the rates of freight existing between the Eastern States and Western Australia. I do not know that the House is too clear as to the condition of affairs. The intercolonial steamship companies, as we all know, demand a very high rate of freight between the East and West of Australia, much more than they do between the other States; and, strange to say, the merchants of this State are entirely favourable to the increased rates, for this reason. The freight from London to Fremantle is much higher than from London to the Eastern ports, and that is another injustice to this State which needs attention. If the intercolonial rates were reduced, the Eastern merchants would stock heavily and would undersell the merchants here; but in order to keep the trade in their hands the local merchants are entirely favourable to the high rates of freight that exist between this and the Eastern States. Until something is done to break down this condition of affairs, so long shall we be penalised with the high freights that exist. When we break down the freights that exist between the Eastern States and Western Australia, then we can look to breaking down the high freights between London and Fremantle. While the freights between London and Fremantle are so high, it is entirely to the advantage of local merchants to maintain the high freights from Western Australia to the Eastern States, in order to have the trade here instead of the stock

being sent on to the East. These are matters which I think might well command the attention of the Government, more so, perhaps, than subsidising a steamer to trade between Fremantle and Geraldton. I am not too friendly towards the Midland Railway, but I say the Government of this State have made a bargain with this company, and they should carry out their part of the bargain in every respect. Under the conditions on which the company hold that land they are bound to charge the same rate as the Government charge.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: They cannot charge less.

MR. HOLMES: They cannot charge less. We increase our freights for the general traffic on the Government railways, so the Midland Railway increase theirs accordingly.

MR. CONNOR: We make them a present of about £14,000 a year.

MR. HOLMES: I hope the Attorney General will tell us exactly what the condition of affairs is. I am giving my ideas now, and can be contradicted later on. I think we can compel the Midland Railway Company to have a high rate of freight. Then we subsidise a steamer to the extent of £5,500 a year to take freight away. It does not seem to be fair or just. We have made a bad bargain with the Midland Railway Company, and as soon as we can square accounts and get rid of them the better; but let us not act in a back-handed way and subsidise a steamer to the extent of £5,500 a year, which does not have the desired effect. Coming to the Royal Commission appointed a considerable time back, it was thought that their labours would have ended long before this. I never approved of the appointment. My memory carries me back to the time when the Leake Government first came into office. We were going to have reforms, to do all this work, and put everything all right. Subsequently it became necessary—at least my friends on the Treasury bench thought so, or rather I think some of their predecessors committed them to it—that a Royal Commission should be appointed to deal with the Public Service of this State. The member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse), this afternoon expressed the opinion that the Government might themselves have

undertaken the work. I think it was the duty of the Under Secretaries who have controlled all these departments for so many years to make recommendations to Ministers; and if they were not capable of making the recommendations and showing where economy could be effected, they were not suitable for the positions they held. However, the trouble is this, that now the Royal Commission have gone through a good many of the departments, we do not seem to have got much farther ahead, and we have no idea as to when they are going to complete their labours. In my opinion it would have been much better for the Ministers to recall those Commissioners long since, and for them or the Under Secretaries to deal with the difficulties and carry out reform, keeping in line with the local conditions that exist. Whilst criticising my friends on the Treasury bench in these matters, I recognise that they are not altogether responsible for them. The difficulties came to them, and they have done the best they could under the circumstances. There is no doubt that outside these the Government have done good work, and each Minister who occupies a department has worked hard, worked well, and worked faithfully. Particularly do I desire to congratulate the Treasurer for the manner in which he has grappled with the finances of the State; the business-like way in which he has dealt with every subject that has come before him. I know something of the difficulties of office, the redtape difficulties that become repugnant to a man of business, and the wonder to me is that my friend the Treasurer did not throw up the billet long ago. He has displayed energy, pluck, and determination that few of us possess, in battling with those difficulties and in putting, as he has done, not only the finances of the State but many of the departments on a sound business footing. The Constitution and electoral reforms which are promised will, I take it, be somewhat in accordance with the compromise that was effected last Session, but which met its doom in the other Chamber. I hope that when we consider these subjects we shall remember that this is a large State with important interests at stake, which we have not only to protect but to develop. It is our duty to keep this fact in view.

We should look for prosperity in the future from the result of wise legislation of to-day. We must not be led away by the man who makes the most noise, nor must we be controlled by the men who stand at the street corners. The man in the street has not the control of the destinies of this State. It is the level-headed business men of the State whose duty it is at this stage to see that industries which are only awaiting development are properly encouraged. It is our duty to legislate and bring about satisfactory results in that direction. Coming to the question of railways I agree to the proposal to extend the railway from Collie to the Great Southern Railway. As to what route should be taken I have no particular interest. I simply desire that those who know best should explain to this House where the best country is, and what part would be served best. I am entirely in accord with the proposition to construct the railway, and construct it so that it will do the greatest good to the greatest number. The question of the Fremantle-Jandakot-Armadale Railway is a matter that will come up for discussion. To my mind there is only one good argument which can be used for the construction of this railway. The distance from Jarrahdale *via* Perth to Fremantle to-day is 41 miles. The distance from Jarrahdale direct to Fremantle is  $21\frac{1}{2}$  miles, a saving of  $19\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

MR. PIGOTT: Why do you not use that argument with regard to Esperance?

MR. HOLMES: We have a port, the principal one of the Commonwealth, at Fremantle. What is there at Esperance? An open roadstead. We cannot make ports all along the coast. I repeat that the distance from Jarrahdale *via* Perth to Fremantle is 41 miles, and the distance from Jarrahdale direct to Fremantle, as suggested by myself and a number of others, is  $21\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The distance from Jarrahdale to Fremantle *via* Armadale is  $27\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Taking the direct route from Jarrahdale Junction to Fremantle the distance would be  $21\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Taking the roundabout way from Armadale the distance would be  $27\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Now we have Robb's Jetty lying on the west side. The railway would commence from the terminus of that, no matter where the Government propose the junction to

be. We have Woodmans Point Railway on the west side, and we have the South-Western Railway on the east. The distance in a direct line from one to the other would, I think, be 14 miles. A settler located midway is seven miles from Woodmans Point Railway, and seven miles from Armadale. There is only one argument connected with this railway, and that is the shortest journey for the back traffic to the port of Fremantle. I think people at Jandakot need roads. I am prepared to do all I can to assist in providing them with good roads through this area; yet I am prepared to advocate a railway being constructed from the terminus of Woodmans Point direct to Jarrabdale Junction, the journey being less by about  $19\frac{1}{2}$  miles than that which exists at the present time *via* Perth, and six miles less than it would be by the roundabout way from Armadale. It is the long-distance traffic on our railways we have to cater for. The more we extend out back, the greater is the necessity for shortening the distance to the port of shipment. Six miles saved on the traffic of to-day and six miles saved on the traffic of years to come is a big consideration. To handicap Fremantle unnecessarily to the extent of six miles would be to commit an injustice. The more I see of the Eastern States and other parts of Australasia, the more convinced am I of the possibilities of this State. I look forward to the day, not far distant either, when Fremantle will be exporting a considerable amount of produce—wheat, for example.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The whole of it will go from Albany.

MR. HOLMES: I differ from the hon. member on a good many points, and I am afraid we shall have to differ on this one also. I contend that the produce of the eastern districts will find its way to the goldfields, and that the produce of the south-western districts will find its way to the metropolitan markets. The surplus—and we shall have a surplus in a few years—will be exported from Fremantle. [MR. HAYWARD: How about Bunbury?] Take apples, for example. The P. and O. and Orient boats at the present day leave Sydney for Hobart, where they load apples. In the course of a few years—

HON. F. H. PIESSE: They will be coming to Albany.

MR. HOLMES: The hon. member has Albany on the brain. If in the course of a few years we have a surplus of fruit to export—as I honestly believe we shall have—Fremantle will offer far better facilities for shipment than does Hobart, because our port is over a week nearer to the London market, and consequently offers a better chance for the fruit to arrive there in good condition. It has been stated that I have a personal interest in the matter of this railway, because in conjunction with my brothers I happen to own some property in the neighbourhood. I do not think I have yet got down, and I hope I shall never get down, to that level in politics. The facts of the matter are that my brothers and I have a paddock, consisting of sandhills with a little fresh water, in which we hold stock. As the cattle cannot get anything to eat in the paddock, they stand in the cool water up to their backs; and that does them a lot of good. Now, I say that the running of a railway through this paddock—I am trying to keep the railway out of it—and the consequent cutting up of the land into sections, will not do me much good. And yet prominent men, even members of the House, suggest that I have an axe to grind.

MR. JACOBY: Who said that? It was not said on the Opposition side.

MR. HOLMES: The matter will come up again, and therefore I purpose to say no more on it at the present stage, except that the only good argument which can be used is that by taking one route, 20 miles are saved in respect of all traffic carried to Fremantle, and that a farther saving of six miles is effected by the Armadale route; and I am sure that consideration will weigh with members of the House. I observe that the Government propose to expend money in connection with the Bunbury harbour works. Whilst prepared to admit the necessity for harbour improvements at Bunbury, and to assist my South-Western friends in that direction, I want some clear and definite statement from the engineers who are the responsible advisers of the Minister for Works before I vote a penny for the purpose. We know, or we are led to believe, that Bunbury harbour



is fast silting up. We are told that the farther the breakwater is extended the more the silt is increased. If the proposed expenditure of money is to afford only temporary relief, then I shall not be a party to the expenditure. On the other hand, if the Government, through their responsible advisers, can convince the House that good work is to be done at Bunbury, then my South-Western friends may rest assured that they will have my support towards the object in view. The question of metropolitan water supply comes up every session. It has been before the House year after year, and I am indeed pleased at obtaining a definite statement from the Premier that the subject is to be dealt with during this session. I thank him for that statement. It is a source of gratification to me to know that some finality is to be reached before Parliament prorogues. The question of sewerage is another one which has been brought up on many occasions without anything definite being arrived at. The member for York (Mr. Burges), referring to Fremantle, said the other day that the port was a hotbed of plague. I do not think the hon. member knows the condition of affairs and the difficulties to be contended with at Fremantle or he would not have made such a statement. In some places Fremantle is only two feet above the sea level, and it will be readily admitted that to deal with sewage in such places is a matter of extreme difficulty. Besides, vessels coming from foreign ports bring all sorts of diseases, including plague; and to lay the prevalence or occasional occurrence of epidemics to the charge of the town of Fremantle and its inhabitants is, therefore, hardly fair. The geographical position of Fremantle causes it to be visited by ships from all the ports of the Far East, and therefore, I repeat, it is unreasonable to attribute to Fremantle's sanitary condition the prevalence of disease. At this point I wish to observe that Fremantle has not been treated too well by the Government in connection with the stamping out of the plague. The municipal council of the port has done good work towards arriving at a better state of affairs, and it has not received from the Government so much assistance in that direction as might be desired. An hon. member laughs: it

takes very little to make some members laugh.

MR. TAYLOR: Oh, Fremantle gets nothing from the Government!

MR. HOLMES: When the Government thought Fremantle had stamped out the plague and had dealt with the difficulties created, they claimed that they had done some work.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government only paid for the work.

MR. HOLMES: I am willing to admit that the Government paid for the work they did, to the extent of £300. [THE PREMIER interjected.] The point I want to make is that the Government did what they deemed their part of the work, and that the Fremantle people did what they considered fell within the scope of their jurisdiction, but that when the Fremantle Municipal Council applied for its subsidy, the Government deducted from the amount of that subsidy £300 said to have been expended in stamping out the plague.

THE PREMIER: The deduction of £300 represented only part of the expense—less than a third.

MR. HOLMES: The Premier, of course, knows the legal position; but I question, nevertheless, the right of the Government to deduct from the subsidy in that manner. The Government expended certain moneys; I do not think Fremantle asked them to expend anything; and then, having expended certain moneys in stamping out the plague, the Government now deduct that amount from Fremantle's municipal subsidy.

THE PREMIER: Only £300 has been deducted—less than a third of the amount spent. The hon. member knows well enough that Fremantle struck a health rate of only 1½d. in the pound.

MR. HOLMES: Passing to the next subject, I am pleased to note that a suggestion has been made to improve the educational facilities of the State. I congratulate the Government on the wisdom of their proposal. No doubt much has been done already, and the children of to-day enjoy great advantages as compared with those of 15 or 16 years ago. We must, however, educate our rising generation so as to keep it in line with the children of other States, who receive a much higher class of education than that so far obtainable here. We

must keep our children up to the level of those in more favoured localities. I observe that legislation dealing with factories is to be introduced; and at this stage I desire to say that, whilst such legislation is necessary, it ought not to be too drastic. Though favouring any reasonable Factories Bill, I must ask that the clauses shall not be too drastic; otherwise they will not get my support. I understand that the Hospitals Bill which the Government propose to introduce will have the effect of making hospitals local institutions. The Government propose to make the property owners within a given area pay for the upkeep of a hospital. The fairest and best way is to make the general taxpayer of the State support the hospitals. It is but reasonable that the general taxpayer should pay for the attention and accommodation provided. Fremantle Hospital, I believe, has done as much in proportion to its size as has any other hospital in the State; possibly more. The hospital board has spent £3,500 in building necessary additions to the institution. Under existing conditions it matters not whether patients come from the goldfields or elsewhere, or from a vessel which puts into the port with sickness on board; there is no line drawn; everybody is attended to, and the general taxpayer pays. But the effect of localising institutions will be that the Fremantle people will look after their own sick, and that the Government will have to provide for the rest. Such a condition of affairs ought not to exist, and it is not one which we should legislate to create. The Fremantle Hospital has done good work, and the services rendered by its board have not been adequately appreciated by the Government. Only recently portion of the hospital lands was taken away, and it is proposed to erect a school on the resumed area. The attention of the Government was called to the fact that the school would be on one side of the wall, and the nurses' quarters on the other. I may mention that these quarters were built by the people of Fremantle at a cost of £1,100. Attention having been directed, as I say, to the matter it was proposed to put galvanised iron—[MEMBER: Eighteen inches high]—along the top of the wall in order to prevent the noise of the

children in the playground from disturbing the night nurses in their endeavours to get sleep during the day. Now, however, the Government are not satisfied with that even. The sum of £3,500 has been spent by the hospital committee out of local subscriptions in making additions to the buildings, which are situated on Government land. The Government now, I am led to believe by the board, have decided not to reinsure these additional buildings, but throw the onus of doing so on the hospital committee; and I say that if a community receives treatment like this, there is no encouragement for a board to help themselves. One of the principal difficulties existing to-day, and a matter that deserves the attention of the Government, is the cost of living in this State. The rate of wages is higher than in the Eastern States, but after all it is only a bare living. I am not surprised that the working people are fighting through the Arbitration Court for conditions that would not be asked for if the cost of living were lower. It is well enough perhaps for those who are in permanent employment, but the Arbitration Act has a tendency to impose conditions on employers which will tend to increase the cost of production; and that will make it pretty severe for those who are out of employment.

MR. HOLMAN: It has never done it yet.

MR. HOLMES: I say that every decision of the Arbitration Court, every condition the Court imposes, has the effect of increasing the cost of production.

MR. TAYLOR: You view it through capitalistic spectacles.

MR. HOLMES: No; I view it from an ordinary business standpoint; and before the hon. member had the honour of a seat in this House, I fought hard for those he represents and is supposed to be working for now.

MR. TAYLOR: You have changed since.

MR. HOLMES: I have not changed in one iota. I am not complaining of the high rate of wages at all.

MR. TAYLOR: Your company fought bitterly at the Court.

MR. HOLMES: We had reason for it. I do not object to the rate of wages, but to the conditions imposed. The result of conciliation and arbitration is to take the

control of a business out of the employer's hands and put it in the hands of someone else. I never had any trouble with my men till the Conciliation and Arbitration Act provided them with the means of fighting and harassing the employer. My men have no grievance against me. I can produce men who, since the award, would sign the old pay-sheet and go on under the old condition of affairs, if members of the union would allow them.

MR. TAYLOR: That is played out. It is an old tale.

MR. HOLMES: I do object to the Court imposing conditions on employers, while not knowing anything of the difficulties which employers have to contend with.

MR. TAYLOR: Your evidence shows what you contended for.

MR. HOLMES: I never went before the Court at all.

MR. TAYLOR: You have a brother who did.

MR. HOLMES: If the hon. member wants to know something about conciliation and arbitration, if I were to give him my experience in the matter it would do his cause no good. In connection with the difficulties I had to deal with, the slaughtermen forced every point they could get before the Court. They fought for a higher rate of wages than existed before, and they contended for payment of time and a-half for overtime and double pay on Saturday. The award was given on a Monday, and the next day the men decided that they would kill only so many cattle and sheep per day, thereby increasing the cost of slaughtering by nearly 25 per cent. That is my experience of the action of men as a result of arbitration. There was no trouble so far as our firm was concerned until the Act provided means for the agitator to cause trouble. Going back to the question of the cost of living, I repeat that it is a matter the Government should deal with, and do it promptly. If they can bring down the cost of living, then even if it became necessary to reduce wages, the great bulk of the working people would be on equal, if not better, conditions than exist to-day. One of the principal matters that should engage the attention of the Government is the introduction of cattle from East Kimberley

into Fremantle and the Southern districts. In the East Kimberley district there are thousands and thousands of cattle, and it is an established fact that it is one of the best cattle-producing districts in Australia, that we have hundreds of thousands in that portion of the State; and those people on the Eastern Goldfields who have been clamouring for a wholesome and plentiful supply of meat could have that supply by allowing the East Kimberley cattle to come to Fremantle and the Southern districts. One of the difficulties in the way is the enforcement of the tick regulations.

MR. CONNOR: Which you helped to make.

MR. HOLMES: Which I helped to make, on the advice of an expert specially imported from Queensland to report on the subject. The condition of affairs existing in Fremantle to-day ought not to continue. We have four steamers carrying stock from East Kimberley, and it is estimated that from 15,000 to 17,000 bullocks will be brought down this season. I know nothing directly as to the loss that takes place between Wyndham and Fremantle, as I have not seen the cattle shipped and afterwards seen their condition when landed at Fremantle; but I know that after landing at Fremantle and till the time expires when they go into consumption, the loss in weight reaches 30lbs. per bullock on the average. It is the most valuable part that is wasted, and the bones remain. In addition to that loss there is an expense of £7 10s. a ton for hay, on which the bullocks are fed while awaiting slaughter; that so that we might well put the depreciation of bullocks standing in the yard at £1 per head all round. Reckoning 17,000 bullocks that have come from East Kimberley this year, and reckoning what is wasted in the yard, it means that the people here and on the Eastern Goldfields must pay £17,000, for what? To obtain protection against tick that does not exist in this part of the State. Have not the Government tried to breed ticks? Tick cattle have been coming to Fremantle for 10 years past, and some of them have been getting out of the yard and sometimes we never saw them again, yet it is impossible to find a tick of any description in any part of the Southern

districts. Tick cattle had been brought to Fremantle for a couple of seasons before the tick regulations were put in force. Cattle have been landed and have been getting away from the yards ever since, yet there is not a sign of tick in these districts. If these tick regulations were enforced for a purpose, I could understand them; but they are enforced for no purpose whatever. Remove the tick restrictions, and any amount of cattle from the northern districts of this State would be available for grazing all over the close settlements in the southern districts. We can only draw our supplies from the northern areas during some eight months of the year, as the other four months do not permit of cattle being brought here from the North. If we could put two-thirds of them for immediate consumption, and put the other third on to grassy land in the southern districts, then during the four months of the year in which we cannot draw cattle from East Kimberley those cattle could be brought back from the grazing paddocks and utilised for consumption. During those four months we have now to draw from the Eastern States for a supply of cattle, and those States have a difficulty at present in supplying Western Australia with the stock required; so that the loss incurred at present would be prevented if during the eight months of the year in which stock can be brought from East Kimberley that stock could be utilised to the extent of two-thirds going directly into consumption, as I have said, and the other third being put on grazing land, to be brought back when the supply from the North fell off. Whilst I favour the liberation of these cattle at Fremantle, I should never be a party to their travelling overland down to Perth. Whilst I would do my best to remove the restrictions that exist at Fremantle to-day, I should not be a party to introducing tick into the herds at West Kimberley, or any of the adjacent stations, by travelling cattle overland. We have evidence of cattle being ticked at Fremantle. What happened in connection with one shipment? Dr. Jameson, I think, decided that they should be dipped and let go. They were dipped and let go and sent down to Rockingham, 20 miles south of Fremantle, and Mr. Richardson was a probable purchaser,

but he heard that his paddock was likely to be quarantined.

MR. CONNOR: The Government would not allow them to be sold to him.

MR. HOLMES: At all events, the cattle were travelled to Rockingham, 14 or 16 miles from Fremantle. There tick does not exist, but unfortunately the regulations are in force. They were travelled 14 or 16 miles south of Fremantle, and when the probable purchaser, Mr. Richardson, found he could not get possession of them, they were travelled back into the quarantine yards, and ultimately put into consumption.

MR. CONNOR: No; ultimately sent to Mr. Copley's paddocks.

MR. HOLMES: It is a mere matter of detail. The cattle were let out of the yard.

MR. CONNOR: It is an important detail.

MR. HOLMES: As far as my argument is concerned, it is a matter of detail. The cattle have been sent out of the yard and brought back, yet there have been no bad effects upon the surrounding herds. Although they are few and far between, yet there are these absurd regulations. Apart from all this, there is the broader and larger scheme, which should have demanded the attention of the Government, and that is the erection of freezing works on a large scale. I have referred to the loss that I know exists—I do not know the extent of it—between the port of shipment at Wyndham and the port of discharge at Fremantle. Anybody who knows anything about the trade must admit that when you have fat cattle for days down the hold of a ship there must be loss. If freezing works were erected at Wyndham we should avoid this loss, and we should get meat into the metropolitan market in much better condition. This, I think, is a matter that ought to engage the attention of the Government. It is too large a scheme for those interested in the trade to take in hand themselves. If those in the trade took it in hand, it would create a monopoly. You would have the trade controlling the monopoly, whereas if you bring about satisfactory results this monopoly should be controlled by the State.

MR. JACOBY: Are there not freezing works now in the North?

MR. HOLMES: No. There was some talk about it, but I think it is generally

admitted it would have to be done on a very large scale if done at all. I do not propose to say any more at this stage other than that, subject to a little wholesome criticism, I am perfectly satisfied with the hon. members who occupy the front Treasury bench. I think we all admit they have done good work, and are doing good work, and while they continue doing that, they can depend upon loyal support from me; or my friends opposite can rest assured that if they have any proposition which meets my views, and will bring it along, they can have support from me to it, if it be a good one and well deserving of the support which I will loyally tender. I thank members for the attention they have given me, and at this stage I will not say anything farther.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. H. Rason):** As, unfortunately, I am the first member of the Ministry to address the House in this debate, it would be ungrateful on my part if I did not express my thanks to those gentlemen who have spoken for the kind and generous tenor of their remarks. Mr. Speaker, so many expressions of pleasure at your recovery to health and at your presence in this House have already reached you that I am afraid you will begin to weary of reiteration; but I could not allow it to be said that mine was the only voice that did not join in these congratulations. For indeed it is known to every member of this House, no matter where he may sit, that you enjoy the respect and affection of every one of us, not only in your official capacity as Speaker, but as a brother member of the Assembly, and as the member for Nelson. (Applause.) I also wish to join most heartily in the eulogiums which have been uttered with regard to His Excellency the Governor. This State seems to have been remarkably fortunate of late in regard to the selection of Governors. In the case of the last Governor, Sir Arthur Lawley, we had a soldier who won golden opinions from everyone with whom he came in contact; and now in Sir Frederick Bedford we have a sailor who has already endeared himself to many people, and whose reign or whose administration in this State promises to be a remarkably fortunate one. Coming to the criticisms and remarks which have

fallen from members during this debate, I do not think there is very much that demands a reply; but I could not help noting some remarks of the leader of the Opposition when he was discussing the Address, being the first member to speak after the mover and seconder. One remark which I noticed was that the Government appeared to be showing a little more confidence in the future of the State; confidence which they had previously lacked. I cannot help thinking that the hon. member was not quite serious. He possibly thought it was necessary to import into his speech a little of the sarcasm of which the previous leader of the Opposition was such a past-master; because I do not think this Government can ever be accused of having displayed a want of confidence in the future of the State, that is the confidence which is distinguished from recklessness. In this connection, I would like to remind members of the remarks of the Treasurer when he introduced his Budget Speech last Session. The very commencement of that speech reads:—

I think I am perfectly justified in allowing a tone of hopefulness, absolute hopefulness and trust in the future of this State, to permeate the whole of my utterances; for I venture to say that never in the history of Western Australia has the outlook of all its industries been more promising.

That is how the speech began. This is how it ended:—

Now, we must show to the world that not only can we borrow money and spend it, but that we can save it; also that when the necessity does occur we can take our responsibilities on our own shoulders. We do not want our children, when they grow up, to say to us, "You must have had not only prodigal sons amongst you, but you must have been a nation of prodigals." Rather let them say that when the time of necessity came we did our duty, which duty is to see how far we can assist the country onward, assist it with the revenue at our disposal, assist it by economical construction of public works, to become, as it has every prospect of becoming, the gem of the Commonwealth.

Does that display a want of confidence in the future? I think that from that speech alone it will be seen that our guiding star was faith in the State. It was so then, and it is our firm belief and guiding star to-day. The hon. member also blamed the Government for introducing class legislation, and when my friend the Premier asked for an illus-

tration of class legislation, he gave us as an instance the Factories Bill. Surely you cannot call the Factories Bill class legislation. Similar legislation exists in the other States, and has existed in the mother country for over a century. In the mother country, the first Bill dealing with factories was introduced in the year 1802, and legislation on those lines in the mother country has continued, and is continuing up to the present day. In the course of that century there has only been one object, that being the bettering of the conditions and surroundings of the worker, seeing that, as far as possible, his working conditions were healthy and clean, both hygienic and moral.

MR. PROCTT: That is all right, as far as it goes.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am glad to hear the hon. member's view that it is all right. I think, therefore, that we may look with confidence to receiving his support in endeavouring to pass this Factories Bill through the Assembly. The opposition of the hon. member, or of those who have said they are opposed to a Factories Bill, is nothing novel. There has always been the same old cry, that it was an undue interference with freedom of contract, and the putting of disabilities on the employer. I should have thought that in all this time that process of reasoning which comes from darkness had been dispelled; but it seems that even a century of light has not removed all the darkness that exists in the minds of some people. Surely the hon. member does not wish to go back to those dark ages in which the conditions of the worker were simply horrible, where in their surroundings men, women, and children were little better than brute beasts; and, in some respects, in the way they were treated and in the value in which they were held, they were worse than brute beasts. Surely a Factories Bill, which goes no farther than to say that the conditions of the worker shall be as clean and healthy as possible, puts no disabilities on any man who is trying to do that which is right. Indeed, in my opinion, it places no disadvantages on the average employer. The average employer sees without any compunction that his workers' lot is made as comfortable as he fairly can make it. It is legislation such

as this which protects the good employer against the competition of the sweater, who cares nothing at all for the condition of his employees, but only for the profit he can make out of them. I contend that a Factories Bill places no hardship upon the employer who has the interests of his workers at heart. The first paragraph in the Governor's Speech to which any objection was taken is that having reference to Mr. Chamberlain's recent proposals; yet that paragraph is worded in a very mild way. It reads:—

The recent movement in the mother country towards securing closer trade relations between the various parts of the Empire has been welcomed in this State with feelings of warm sympathy and sincere hopes for its ultimate success.

I believe it is contended by some that this is a matter entirely for the Commonwealth to deal with. I do not agree with that view at all. We may indeed justly be proud of forming members of the Australian Commonwealth; but, to my mind at all events, there is a grander and prouder boast still that we are members of the British Empire. Surely, when such proposals are submitted, proposals with which our destinies are closely wrapped up—[MR. DAGLISH: Party proposals]—we may at least express our opinions on them. It is well that we should express some opinion rather than let it be thought that we view the subject with apathy and indifference. Those of us who look forward to federation of the British Empire know full well that the first step towards that federation is closer trade relationship. We know that to be the first step forward, the first step onward; and do we not also know that we must move forward and onward, that for nations there is no standing still, that either they must advance to increased prosperity or else relapse into decay? I for one look forward with hope and confidence to that federation, the greatest federation the world will ever witness, the federation of the British Empire; and it is because I look forward to it that I welcome these proposals which have been submitted by Mr. Chamberlain. I welcome them the more because they come from one who has the interests of the colonies at heart. The member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) made some quotations from the right hon.

gentleman's speech; but the words which I had in my mind and which I noted as proving that Mr. Chamberlain has a proper regard for the colonies are these, uttered by him many years ago:—

I want to prove to them (the colonies) that we are as proud of them as we believe they are proud of us; that we have confidence in their future, and that we hope that in their closer union with ourselves in time to come the British Empire, founded on freedom, buttressed by affectionate sentiment, fortified by mutual interest, shall stand impregnable, unassailable, "four-square to all the winds that blow."

I come now to the Coolgardie Water Scheme. In the first place, I wish to thank the member for Northam (Hon. G. Throssell) and the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie) for their kindly words of encouragement. One indeed needs patience, all the patience at one's command, in dealing with this scheme, which seems in effect to be a fruitful source not only of countless worries and anxieties but of the most perverse misrepresentations. Little more than a year ago the work, even as an engineering project, was surrounded by the deepest gloom. The darkest prophecies were heard on every hand. The weir would not hold water; it would not dam the water back; there would be no water to dam, at least not in the orthodox manner; the pipes would not hold water; the pumps would not work; in fact, the scheme would be a most thoroughly successful failure all round.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: That has been going on for years.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That has been going on from the commencement of the scheme, and unfortunately it goes on to the present day. However, all those dark prophecies were disregarded. The engineers who were intrusted with the work persistently went on with their duty; they were loyal to their employer, the State, and loyal to their former chief, the late Mr. O'Connor; they worked unfortunately as few men do work to bring this scheme to a successful issue. And we know the result; we know that the water was pumped to Kalgoorlie, and that on the 26th January last the formal opening took place. I feel bound at this stage to say this, that the engineers, from the Engineer-in-Chief downwards, did their utmost to make the scheme a success.

The meed of praise awarded to them is, to my mind, not by any means commensurate with the value of the work they did. I have distinctly in my mind's eye what occurred at Kalgoorlie in connection with the formal opening. Amongst many words of praise of other people I regret to say that there were few for the engineers and the men who actually did the work. However, I believe now that although hon. members and other people have not expressed their thanks, at all events not profusely; still they do recognise that the engineers and the men did good work. I for one recognise it, and thank them for it. Let us now review the financial aspect of affairs in the light of recent criticism. Reference has been made to a meeting at which the people of the Eastern Goldfields are supposed to have passed a resolution that they would pay no rate at all, that they would decline to pay any rate whatever on the ground of the high price charged for the water, on the ground of the iniquitous nature of the rate. It is said that more water would be sold if the price were reduced to the public, and that the scheme would thus benefit financially. It has even been said that the cause of the supposed dissatisfaction is that the goldfields people get no water in return for the rates to be paid. Now, to each and every one of those statements I give an unqualified denial.

MR. PIGOTT: In that case, why did you reduce the rate?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the hon. member will possess his soul in patience I shall tell him, provided only he will allow me an opportunity of doing so. As to no return being made for the rate which has been struck—I may remark, by the way, this statement has been made even by some goldfields representatives in Parliament—I do not know how that conclusion was arrived at. It does not say much for the interest those members take in matters affecting their districts, because the *Government Gazette* in which notice of the rate was given, and the advertisement appearing in the *Coolgardie Miner* and *Kalgoorlie Miner* stated that—

Every rate-paying consumer will be entitled to a supply of water at the rate of 8s. per thousand gallons in return for the amount of rates paid by him, provided that the water shall be taken during the period for which the

rate is struck . . . . . and 7s. 6d. per thousand gallons for the excess up to a total consumption of 8,000 gallons per quarter, and 7s. per thousand gallons for any excess beyond a total consumption of 8,000 gallons per quarter.

I hope it will be admitted, therefore, that we have effectually and completely disposed of the statement that the ratepayers get no return for the amount paid by way of rate. I deny, however, that it is the people of the Eastern Goldfields who have made the complaint; I deny that there is any such complaint from the people of the Eastern Goldfields as a people. I am satisfied that goldfields residents do not ask anything so wholly unreasonable as that they should pay no rate at all. I believe, and I am content to believe, that they are prepared to pay a fair and reasonable sum for what they get; and I decline to recognise the voice of a few busybodies as being the voice of the people. Now, what are the facts? The rate is 1s. 6d. in the £; and for payment of that rate the people, as I have just pointed out, get an ample return in water. The rate in Perth is 1s. in the £, and the rate which the Government had power under the Act of last session to strike is 2s. in the £. I ask, therefore, can it be said that having power to strike a rate of 2s., we behaved in the arbitrary manner which some people would have the country believe in striking a rate of only 1s. 6d.? The rate in Perth being 1s., can it be argued that for water pumped over a distance of 352 miles to the goldfields a rate of 1s. 6d. is exorbitant? Let us see, however, whether after all the rate is fair and reasonable. In 1901 the question was thoroughly gone into, and a statement was prepared showing the quantity of water Eastern Goldfields residents consumed, and what that quantity cost them. I have studied that return, amongst many others, and I have it in my mind's eye, to a considerable extent. The average cost of domestic water, fresh and condensed, for household purposes was in 1901 about 7s. 6d. per 100 gallons, which amount represents the price for which the Government now supply 1,000 gallons. It must be borne in mind, also, that this water which we sell ten times as cheaply as it could be procured in 1901, is water which the consumer has ready to hand, night and day, in any quantity

he may desire, by the simple turning of a tap.

MR. F. CONNOR: But water is cheaper than that on the Eastern Goldfields now.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Undoubtedly, now; but can the goldfields residents get it cheaper in February or March of next year? Without the scheme, could they get it at anything like so cheap a rate on an average all the year round? Indeed, can the householder get it as cheaply now? I very much doubt that he can: I am almost certain that he cannot. At all events, he cannot get the water delivered to his door; and assuredly, but for the scheme, he could not get it delivered a quart at a time, the way he can take the water from the scheme if he wants to do so, at the rate of 7s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons.

MEMBER: Nor could he get it as pure.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Next, let us see the incidence of the rate and how it affects the ratepayer. The occupant of a tenement of a rental value of 7s. 6d. per week would probably have his premises valued by the municipality—and the Government follow the municipal rate—at £13 10s. per annum. In such case the occupant would pay the minimum water-rate of £1 per annum. In return he gets ready to his hand, as I have said, 125 gallons of water for every shilling of rate. In return for his pound sterling the occupant gets 2,500 gallons of water, which is equal roughly to 50 gallons per week. Prior to the advent of the scheme, the same quantity of water would have cost him £9 7s. 6d. It may be said that I have selected a very low valuation, and that most of the tenements on the goldfields are very much higher in value. I have looked into that point also, and I find the figures are these:—In Coolgardie over 64 per cent. of the total assessments are under £15, and therefore over 64 per cent. of the people in Coolgardie would pay the minimum rate of £1 per annum; 17 per cent. are assessed at £15 to £26; 7 per cent. at from £26 to £40; and only 10 per cent. at over £40. They are supplied by meter. In Kalgoorlie over 33 per cent. are assessed at under £15; 33 per cent. at from £15 to £26; 15·4 per cent. at from £26 to £40; and only 17·8 per cent. at over £40. As to the statement, reiterated so often that it has become positively sickening, that



it was the intention of Sir John Forrest to supply the water to the people on the goldfields at 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons. I deny that he ever said anything of the kind; but some people have said he did, and certain sections of the Press are saying it now. They say that all we ought to charge is 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons delivered in their houses. I deny that such was ever the intention of Sir John Forrest, and many of the people who make use of that statement know full well at the time they make it that they are saying that which is deliberately untrue. If people will not believe me when I make the assertion, perhaps they will believe Sir John Forrest's own words, when he said that the price of 3s. 6d. was to be the price of water delivered at Bulla Bulling Reservoir, and that price was always contingent on a daily sale of 5,000,000 gallons on each and every of the 365 days of the year. Now it is said that it was always the intention of the Forrest Government to supply the water at 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons; but I say that was dependent, as laid down in the report over and over again, on a daily consumption of 5,000,000 gallons a day on 365 days in the year. I say, with the utmost respect, that people are being misled by the statement that it was Sir John Forrest's intention to supply the water at 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons. In order that the matter may be settled, and I trust once and for all, I propose, with the permission of the House, to read what Sir John Forrest actually said on this subject, as reported in the *Morning Herald* of the 23rd August, 1902. Sir John Forrest was interviewed in London with regard to the Coolgardie Goldfields Water Scheme, amongst other things, and what he said was this:—

Let me here explain, (said Sir John, emphatically), that when the scheme was originally conceived, it was never intended to undertake the distribution of the water. The task of conveying it 350 miles, for the most part, through an inhospitable country, was a sufficiently huge one without the Government superintending the local distribution. The scheme provided for the construction of large tanks or dams in the vicinity of the centres which it was designed to serve. Each reservoir was to be fitted with a meter, and mines requiring the water were supposed to lay down their own pipes, and towns to construct their own system of distribution; in other words, when once the reservoirs were supplied, it

became a local matter for local people, who were supposed to pay for the water at the price of 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons fixed by the Government. I sincerely hope the original intention of the Government will be adhered to, though I fear there will be an organised agitation at Kalgoorlie to be relieved of the responsibility of the local distribution. I hope however, wise counsels will prevail, and that the local distribution of the water will be undertaken by the local authorities.

I hope that settles the matter once and for all. That was said when the scheme was well under construction; and I think it clearly proves that in the minds of the originators of the scheme, at all events, the price was to be 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons at Bulla Bulling Reservoir. Now I ask, if local people had undertaken the distribution of water from the reservoir, is it likely that the price charged by those who undertook the work would be any less than 8s. per thousand gallons? There is no probability whatever that it would be less, but there is a great probability that it would have been considerably more. My duty and the duty of the Government is to make the scheme pay, if it can be made to pay, without placing an undue burden on the people who consume the water. It may be said that in charging the present rate we are placing an undue burden on the consumers. I have endeavoured to prove we are not; and I say, without fear of contradiction, that the great majority of the people on the goldfields do not complain at all, but are satisfied that no undue burden is being placed on them: rather that they are getting water more cheaply than they could possibly have got it by any other means, and just as cheaply as if the water had been left at the reservoir at the price of 3s. 6d., and had then to be distributed by the local bodies. We hear something about the people on the goldfields being forced to pay interest and sinking fund, and how wrong it is for a despotic Government to inflict such very hard terms on the consumers. Let us see whether that is so or not. The present sales average half a million gallons daily, and the average price realised is 6s. per thousand gallons. That is a low average quantity at this time of the year, due largely to the presence of so much rainwater on the fields; but that case will fully serve to illustrate my meaning. If we take a

million gallons, a sale not yet reached, the cost per thousand gallons for that quantity delivered to consumers, and including interest and sinking fund with all charges, would be 13s. 8d. a thousand gallons as the cost to the State; therefore can it be said that in charging 8s. per thousand gallons in return for the water rate which is levied, there is any iniquitous burden cast on the people who get the water delivered to them? Can it be said that they have been called on at once to pay interest and sinking fund? I say that, regardless of the sinking fund, the whole cost of a million gallons delivered on the fields is 8s. a thousand, the price at which we are selling it now to the smallest consumers. And as on the one hand we are blamed for charging too much, lest on the other hand we should be blamed for charging too little, I say the price has been fixed at what is considered a reasonable rate, and such a rate as to encourage the consumption of water on the fields. But it has been urged that if we made a farther reduction in the price to the ordinary consumer, the household consumer, we should largely increase the consumption. Let us see whether there is any foundation for this theory, and whether it would be possible by a farther reduction to reach the anticipated sale of five million gallons per day. According to the supplementary census made up to April, 1903, the population within the municipalities of Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and Boulder, was 16,268 souls; but in the East Coolgardie magisterial district, including Kalgoorlie and Boulder, there were 28,196; so if to that number we add Coolgardie and within a radius of six miles from Coolgardie, we should have to add another 4,900 people, making a total of 33,000 men, women, and children on those goldfields to be served with water. If, therefore, we put down 25,000 people as being the utmost number that can possibly be reached by this scheme, we are making what is indeed a most liberal allowance. As to the quantity of water these people could be expected to consume, it may come as a surprise to hon. members to learn that a return prepared in 1901, to which I have previously referred, shows that the water consumption on the fields, not only for domestic use but for ordinary purposes as well, amounted in 1901

to only six gallons per head per diem; so that if the people used enough water from the Goldfields Water Scheme for all purposes and used no more than they have been accustomed to in the past, the total present daily consumption would be 150,000 gallons. In course of time, and it will take time before people will rid themselves of their careful habits in regard to the use of water on the fields, let us say they will reach the average *per capita* consumption that exists elsewhere where water is cheap, where the climatic conditions are similar, and where people make the most liberal use of water for all purposes—for gardening, as has been referred to in the Press, and for growing things to make life more comfortable on the fields. Let us put an average at what is the amount consumed elsewhere under the conditions I have stated, then possibly we should reach the average of 40 gallons per head per diem of consumption for every man, woman, and child. That is a high average, members will admit, and it would mean a total of one million gallons a day consumption by the present population; and that is an average reached only where, as I have said, water is of the cheapest, is so cheap that it can be used lavishly. That would give us possibly an ideal consumption of a million gallons a day per present population on those goldfields. What possible chance therefore is there of reaching a consumption of five million gallons a day with the present population? There is no immediate prospect of reaching anything like that quantity. Talk about reducing the price and selling five million gallons a day, I am not exaggerating in the least if I say that if we gave the water away we would not dispose of five million gallons a day; perhaps we might if we diluted it, but I doubt if we would then. I do think, as I said last Session, that it is possible and it is probable with wise and careful administration to reach a total consumption of two and a-half million gallons a day. We shall have to reach that, and the average price will have to be 6s. before the scheme will pay its way. Is it too much to ask that in the meantime, when the consumption is only one-fifth of that quantity, that the average price shall be the average price that has to be realised when two and a-half million

gallons are being sold? It is said the people of the State as a whole should bear this burden. Are they not bearing a considerable portion of the burden and a greater proportion for my satisfaction altogether? It is an unfair proportion to my mind, and let me remind the people of the goldfields, if there are people there who think this, that the State as a whole took the risk of the immense expenditure of two and a-half millions of money, which was the first estimate, and took it cheerfully, to try an experiment to see if they could get water for the goldfields. It was an experiment and a risk, and a big risk that almost to the last it was thought would result in a failure. Supposing it had, the burden was on the people of the State as a whole, and not upon the few people who resided on the goldfields when the risk was undertaken. I think the member for Northam grasped the real situation when he said that the climatic conditions had altered on the fields. Undoubtedly they have: there is water available on the goldfields to-day such as was never contemplated when the scheme was originated. I venture to say that if it had been contemplated, we should never have seen anything of this scheme. Not only is that the case, but the people have altered also; the people have made provision for collecting and taking care of the water that does fall; and over and above that there is available upon the fields for the mines an immense quantity of salt water: that also does not seem to have been anticipated. It seems to have been thought the mines would never be short of water in any quantity whatever. In regard to the abundant supply of salt water that has always been the difficulty in dealing with the mines in connection with the water supply, to induce them to abandon the supply of salt water and use water from the scheme. I am happy to be able to inform the House that at last we have induced a number of mines on the fields to wholly abandon the use of salt water and guarantee that they will take no water but the water from this scheme, and they have guaranteed that there shall be a minimum consumption of half a million gallons per day. In return for that the price has been reduced, or rather that is not quite the correct way of putting it, although the result is the same. It has been agreed in return that

there shall be a rebate of 1s. in the price allowed them. If we take a month of 30 days, that will mean a consumption of 15 million gallons of water, with a monthly revenue of £3,750. That is from the mines alone, and it means that the mines alone will pay £125 a day for water, and last month when the consumption was 3,978,000 or four millions by the mines the revenue was £1,200; so I think at all events we may congratulate ourselves that a fair business deal has been made with the mines. It will encourage, I hope, the mining industry, at the same time it will have a beneficial effect on the revenue. I have pointed out that there is an abundant supply of this salt water available, and members must realise that the mines have to pump the salt water just the same, whether they use it or not—it has to be raised out of their way; but the result of the agreement is that the water shall be pumped up and allowed to go to waste, the mines using nothing but fresh water. It has also been urged that the Government should go in for extensions. As we cannot sell five million gallons of water readily at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, we should extend the scheme in all directions, so that possibly we may reach that total consumption. That is all very well. I believe the Government would have been prepared, in fact I am sure they would have been prepared, to undertake any extension where it was proved the result would be profitable. One extension of that kind has already been made—that is the extension to Burbanks; but I submit the solution of the difficulty is not in undertaking every extension that happens to come along or is suggested, whether profitable or not, because we would have to undertake extensions that are not clearly profitable on the face of them; at the same time it would mean adding another burden to the existing one and putting another millstone round our necks. As to the water available, there seems to be an astonishing amount of—I had better say—misconception in regard to this matter. I noticed a very extraordinary letter in the *Morning Herald* of the 27th inst. That paper stated that on that date, the 27th, there were 589 million gallons in the weir, whereas on that date, the 27th, there were 621 million gallons in the

weir; only a difference of 34 million gallons, with a value to the State, at the present average price, of over £10,000. The *Morning Herald* gave the figures of the 24th, for on the 24th there were 587 million gallons in the weir, but on the 27th there were 621 million gallons, and to-day there are 625 million gallons in the weir, and in the pipes and reservoirs on the route another 83 million gallons, making a total of 708 million gallons. I mention these figures to try and impress upon members the difference between the quantity on the 24th and the quantity on the 27th—34 million gallons—because it appears that this is very cheering news. It means that the water is beginning to run from the back country. The country is so soaked, and every downpour of rain we get now makes a very appreciable difference in the quantity of water in the weir. It was also stated in the leader to which I referred that the loss in 12 months at the weir and in the pipes conveying the water to the fields amounted to half the total quantity in the weir; so that if we had to supply let us say 100 million gallons of water, it would be necessary to have 200 million gallons in the weir before we could do it. The loss equals half of the whole: that is a most astonishing statement, and I can well imagine the consternation that must have filled the minds of everyone who read it, that is if they believed it. The actual facts in regard to the loss are these. The engineer informs me the loss in 12 months in the weir by evaporation, soakage, etc., ranges from 100 million to 650 million gallons: it depends on the quantity of water impounded. The only illustration I can give members is to deal with the figures as we find them to-day. As the storage is to-day we have 625 million gallons, and the loss in 12 months from that quantity would be from 100 to 150 million gallons. Members will see that it is difficult to discriminate between 100 and 150 even when we are dealing with that quantity present to-day, because there always will be a diminishing quantity, there always will be an outflow if there should not be an inflow. A little farther along I hope I shall be able to illustrate this a little more plainly.

MR. FICOTT: It is not very clear.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It may not be to the hon. member's mind. So much has been said about this loss and not being able to supply the quantity of water demanded from us that it is just as well the true facts should be known. The loss along the track, that is from the pipes, is very liberally estimated if we set it down at 60 million gallons per annum. That would be a loss of 500 gallons per mile per day for 351 miles of pipes. That is a loss which has never yet been experienced. The loss is something like, or hitherto has been something like, 400 gallons per mile of pipes, therefore the total loss in 12 months under present circumstances will not exceed 210 million gallons. That would equal 157 million gallons for the nine months yet remaining up to May, when we may fairly anticipate the rainy season will again set in. The position therefore is that we have 708 million gallons available, and if we deduct from that 150 million gallons which we can take as the loss, the balance available for disposal, if we do not get another drop of water during the next nine months, or until the next winter starts, is 551 million gallons, which will enable us to supply slightly over two million gallons a day if we do not get another drop of water before next May. If you ask me whether we are likely to be called upon to supply two million gallons a day, I say it is very unlikely we shall be required to supply anything like that quantity for some time to come.

MR. CONNOR: In that calculation, how much are you allowing for evaporation?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have allowed for evaporation, also loss along the pipe track. I have allowed 157 million gallons for loss, which is a great deal more than can reasonably be expected, and is more than has occurred in the experience of the past. It has been said that the catchment area ought to be increased; that the Government have failed in their duty in so long neglecting so necessary a work; that it ought to have been put in hand long ago, ought by this time to have been completed, and that till it is completed we shall never have a sufficient quantity of water in that reservoir. The reports of the responsible advisers of the Government tell a very different tale. I do not

wish to inflict on the House the whole of this rather voluminous file; but condensed as far as possible, it means that the rainfall records, which have been taken for the last 25 years, show that the supply is sufficient to fill that weir to overflowing; is sufficient and more than sufficient to give a supply of 5 million gallons a day.

MR. JACOBY: That depends upon how the rain falls.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: We can only take the experience of 25 years as a guide; and the records show that ample provision is made in the present catchment area, not only for what is likely to be needed, but for what it was anticipated would be needed. The Engineer-in-Chief told me in December last that, in his opinion, it was quite unnecessary to increase the catchment area; he confirms that opinion on the 5th June of this year; and it is confirmed by every engineer who has studied the matter. It is all very well to talk about increasing the catchment area. If that would not cost anything, I suppose there would be no objection on anyone's part to the increase; but it would cost probably £20,000, and certainly not less than £15,000. That being so, surely the Government would have been blamed, and rightly blamed to my mind, who undertook such an expense, when by their responsible engineers, as to whose capability there is no doubt, they were advised that it is quite unnecessary. That the advice was good is proved by the quantity of water in the weir to-day, which, as I have said, if we do not get another drop in the course of this winter, is more than sufficient to supply all the demands which will be made upon it. There is just one other point. I am afraid I am wearying members; but I wish to clear up, if I possibly can, and to brush away those cobwebs which seem to surround the minds of so many people in this House, I am sorry to say, and many more out of it. It is frequently said that the cost of the scheme is less than the original estimate, and that therefore there is no excuse for the water being sold at a higher rate than was originally intended. Now, when I informed the House that the cost was less than the estimate, I was glad indeed to give them that intimation; but I referred to the

cost that had always been held would be the cost of completion of the scheme—the cost which became the estimated cost, that is a quarter of a million more than the 2½ millions first provided. It was long ago understood that the estimated cost of the completion of the original scheme would be £2,750,000; whereas the capital cost in its original aspect may be set down as £2,670,000. But it is now argued and made much of, if you please, that the cost has been less than the estimate. The cost has not been less than the original estimate: it has been more. It has been less than the expense which it was always understood after the first year or two had passed it would be necessary to incur to complete the scheme. If we add to that the cost of the reticulation and extensions, which can be set down at £130,000, we have a total expenditure for this scheme of about £2,800,000. Another point made by the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) was that people were called on to sign all sorts of ridiculous stipulations in the agreement, and he wished that some businesslike arrangement could be made with the consumers of this water. I deny that there is anything approaching a ridiculous stipulation in the agreement. I do contend that the agreement is businesslike. Practically it means that when a person wishes to obtain a supply of water from this scheme we insist that he shall sign an agreement that he shall purchase water from no other source. Is not that a businesslike proposal? I should think it would be very unbusinesslike indeed if we entered into an arrangement with a consumer at a fixed price all the year round, while he could avail himself of that price when water was five, six, or ten times the price outside, and just leave it alone in those few months when he could possibly get it cheaper elsewhere. Surely it is not too much to ask that if we supply at an average price, which is a low price, then we shall supply all the year round, and not just when it is most convenient to the consumer to take our water. For this reason we stipulate that the quantity of water given in return for the payment of the rate shall be taken quarterly. If that were not required, I very much fear that ratepayers would allow the quantity of water to which they were entitled to

accumulate. They would not take it in the winter months while they had a supply of rainwater, or could purchase water elsewhere at a cheaper rate: they would allow the water available from the scheme to accumulate, and would take it all together in the very hottest months when water is dearest. We provide against any such temptation by insisting that people shall take out their value of water quarterly; in short, we insist on an average price for an average consumption. If that be unbusinesslike, I fear I must plead guilty to being unbusinesslike; but in the administration of this scheme I intend, always subject to my colleagues' coinciding with me, to endeavour to be as unbusinesslike as that in the future also. In the course of this debate some references were made on which I should like to comment. The member for Wellington (Mr. Teesdale Smith) made some scathing remarks on the administration of the railways by the Commissioner (Mr. W. J. George). I quite understand that to a gentleman in the position of the member for Wellington, who has to manage one of the largest business concerns if not the largest in this State, it must be annoying and aggravating not to be able to do business with outside people just as quickly or as much to his liking as he is in the habit of doing it in his own office. I can well understand that he is impatient of delay; and perhaps—I hope he will pardon my saying so—he expects to get more attention than he is reasonably entitled to. [MR. TEESDALE SMITH: A reply in nine months!] But I am bound to say this.—It is no use disguising a fact which is so apparent: I regret that the manner of the Commissioner is sometimes rather brusque. But those who know him—and the hon. member knows him full well—realise that it is only surface manner; that underneath a somewhat abrupt style there is at least honesty of purpose.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: He always tells us so, anyway.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: And the hon. member believes it, too. Though the manner may not be perfect, yet the intention is good. I regret that in regard to the specific cases the hon. member cited I have not yet the information which would enable me to answer the hon. member in a way I should like.

Undoubtedly his complaints demand inquiry, and that inquiry will be made. But I cannot leave the subject without expressing the hope that the member for Wellington who, smart business man as he is, is yet one of the most good-natured men in the State—that is my experience of him—will allow some of that good nature to be apparent when he is dealing in future with the Commissioner, and will try whether between the two of them they cannot manage to get along a little better than in the past. But one word more. The member for West Kimberley (Mr. Pigott) said he regretted there was not a touch of what he described as "Irvineism" in the Government policy; and the member for Dundas coincided with him and expressed the wish that a man would arise, either on the Opposition side of the House or on this, who would be competent to deal satisfactorily with situations that crop up, and impart to them a touch of Irvineism. Personally I regret that the hon. member should have mentioned this. I do not think we wish to see the necessity arise in this State for a display of what he is pleased to call "Irvineism." I do not think any one of us wishes to see every steamer which leaves this State bear away trained artisans, as unfortunately can be seen in Victoria to-day. But he who praises this so-called Irvineism, and he who blames it, to my mind fails to grasp its full meaning, fails to read the "writing on the wall" which is writ so large that he who runs may read. It means simply that the dominant factor in all such questions is public opinion. Without public opinion at its back, all the Irvineism in the world would be of no avail; and I should like to say this, if I thought my words could possibly be heeded, I should like to ask both employer and employed to take care to be reasonable, to be moderate, and to be just, because if they are not, if once they become unreasonable in their demands, either one or the other, depend upon it they will forfeit that bulwark of public opinion, and are bound to lose. As to the wish that a man would arise competent to deal with these subjects, I think the hon. member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) might be quite content on that score. If the time should arrive when the people become unreasonable in their demands,

when they cease to be moderate and when they cease to be just, if unfortunately, those circumstances should arise, depend upon it the men will not be wanting. At all events, I am convinced that the leader of the present Government and every one of his colleagues will not hesitate to risk their position on this bench, to risk the loss of emolument of office so often referred to, and even to risk their seats in this House, to do that which they conceive to be their duty to the country. I cannot sit down without offering a few words of congratulation to my friend the leader of the Opposition. It is rather a delicate task, because the more I wish him a pleasant and happy time, the more he may think I am indulging in sarcasm; but I do myself sincerely wish him all those things one on this side may wish one on the other side. I sincerely hope that he may not have an undue anxiety to change his locality. I thank hon. members for the very kind hearing they have given to me. I hope—indeed to my mind there are signs of it—that in this the last session of the present Parliament there will not be so much party feeling as perhaps has been displayed on other occasions, that we shall confine ourselves more to the work which is before us, and that we shall indeed get through some work which will be of benefit to the State and accomplish some good to the country. I hope our efforts will be confined to that direction, and if so, then and then only may we expect that the desire expressed in the concluding paragraph of His Excellency's Speech, that the blessing of Providence may rest upon our labours, will be realised. (General applause.)

[MR. HARPER took the Chair.]

MR. F. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I have first to congratulate the country and the members of this House on the fact that the Hon. Sir James Lee Steere has come back to preside over us as Speaker, and I have to welcome him to that honourable position, although he is not here just now. I have also to congratulate my friends who occupy the Ministerial bench on the energy displayed by them since their accession to office. Indeed, it is most admirable to know that all the backblocks of this country have been explored by the hon.

members who sit there. All that it is possible to know of what was not known before by even pioneers is now quite plain to Ministers. However, there is the other question to be thought about in connection with that matter. There is the cost of all these jaunts through the country. I want to know, members of the House will want to know, and the public we represent will want to know, what they will cost. [Interjection by the Premier.] Alter the Constitution, and I will help you every time when it is fair. Every time I spoke here I agreed that there should be a redistribution in this House. I will not go so far as to say there should be a redistribution of seats on a population basis, because that would be an injustice to parts of the country, but that statement—I take it as a statement—from the Premier is absolutely not according to fact.

THE PREMIER: I am referring to that question of turning the two Kimberley electorates into one.

MR. CONNOR: I say it is not fair. We want to know also what the cost of the cruise of the *Penguin* is going to be. I am not going to follow in the footsteps of the Press or a section of the Press and discuss creature comforts on board the *Penguin*, but I say the country will want to know what the cost of the cruise of the *Penguin* will be when it is put down in broad figures.

THE PREMIER: Why do you not ask for a return?

MR. CONNOR: We are coming to that, if the Premier will wait. I listened to the burning eloquent speech just delivered by the Minister for Works and Railways. I call it a most excellent speech; but I cannot help saying it is absolutely the most watery speech I ever listened to. I do not propose to take the items of the Speech sent down to us by His Excellency, but I must try and offer some few suggestions to the Government as to some of the things which have been set forth in the Speech, and which should be altered, and some of the things which are omitted from the Speech. Since the opening of the debate in this House, we have heard a good deal in connection with preferential trade. If preferential trade is going to be of great benefit to us, by all means join in the movement towards it. But what does it mean? Does it mean

protection, or does it mean free-trade? We have been told that the question of protection and free-trade has gone away from us, and has gone to the Federal Parliament. Why do the members speak about it here now, I want to know? If we are to take on this preferential trade and closer relationship business, then we are going to follow again in the footsteps we followed before, when my friends the Premier and the Colonial Treasurer were leaders of the movement which led us into Federation.

**THE PREMIER:** Hear, hear.

**MR. CONNOR:** We are going to follow in the same footsteps again.

**THE PREMIER:** Hear, hear; you cannot follow better leaders.

**MR. CONNOR:** May I also point out to hon. members this fact, that a nominee for the Federal Parliament—a nominee of the Government who certainly will be elected to-morrow—is going there. What is he going there as—a free-trader or a protectionist? What have the Government elected him as? It is on this fiscal question that members are elected. I say he is going as a free-trader, and that the Government could not send anyone but a free-trader who would be in touch with the people who are keeping them in power. If he is going as a free-trader, why do not the Government take the bull by the horns, as they should do—why do they not do away with all those duties which the sliding scale keeps up, and which are so hard on people. The Government went to the Treasury bench as the friends of the people, and I say that as the friends of the people they ought to make an alteration in the tariff. We should wipe out of the Tariff Act those articles which are affected by the sliding scale—the duty on butter, eggs, bacon, preserved meats, cheese, onions, and potatoes. There are two reasons why we ought to do that. The first reason is because, according to the Treasurer's statement, we do not require the revenue. He says we have a surplus of, I think, £300,000. If we have a surplus, we do not require the revenue; and another and the principal reason is that people demand that these duties shall be abolished, and this House must follow the people independently of the views of those who sit on the Treasury bench. When our hon. friends on the

Treasury bench were discussing federation, they told us that if we joined federation all would be well, that credit would be established, and that we should get money cheaper. But since we joined federation, the Treasurer has found a little more difficulty than he anticipated. He got the money, but at such a price that is not for the benefit of the country, and it is detrimental to the interests of the State that we should have to borrow money at the price he had to pay for it. We hear a good deal of a Transcontinental Railway. We are told that if we do not get it the country will not be a success, and that we shall be great losers. That is said by people on the coast. Then we are told by people on the goldfields that they do not want the Transcontinental Railway. There are two different opinions. I unhesitatingly say that the people who are going to lose most through the Transcontinental Railway are the people who live on the coast. They are going to lose every time, and the people on the goldfields who say that they do not want this Transcontinental Railway are those who are going to gain. Why should people, if they want to go to the centres of population in the Eastern States, travel down here, if there were a railway to Port Augusta? Why should they spend two or three days travelling, and wait here possibly three or four days in winter for a boat to travel round the Leeuwin? Why should they come down here and go back the same way, if there were a railway? I do not know why the people in this part of the country are in such a hurry for the Transcontinental Railway. My opinion is that it will be absolutely detrimental to the interests of Perth and Fremantle. I have always thought so. I have never before expressed my opinion on this question publicly, but I do so now as a man of fairly good business capacity and as one who, controlling a large commercial concern, ought to have a fair knowledge of figures and a reasonable degree of ability to estimate the result of a deviation of traffic. If the Transcontinental Railway be constructed, Perth and Fremantle will lose, while Kalgoorlie and the Eastern Goldfields generally will gain. Therefore I am at a loss to understand how it comes about that we in Perth and Fremantle should be fighting for the Transcontinental Railway and the



people on the Eastern Goldfields fighting against it. It seems to me that something is very much wrong. I am convinced that South Australia will derive all possible benefit, and that we shall suffer a heavy loss, from the Transcontinental line. The goldfields residents who now pass through Perth and Fremantle on their way to the Eastern States will not visit this part of Western Australia if that railway is built: they will go direct from the fields eastward. Were I a goldfields resident, I should advocate the construction of the line; but living here in Perth, I oppose the project. The attitude may not be altogether a national one or a federal one, but I am speaking now as a resident of the coastal portion of the State. I say that unquestionably the Transcontinental Railway will do this part of Western Australia a great deal of harm. The line may advantage the rest of Australia, and may be the means of promoting a great scheme of Federal defence, of which, however, I do not know much, since I am not a fighting man. The Speech almost asks us to agree—indeed I believe a Bill will be brought down for the purpose—to the construction of a broad-gauge railway between Fremantle and the Eastern Goldfields. If that project be carried out, we shall need fresh rolling-stock, and the whole work will cost something like two or three millions. And that is the scheme to which the Premier has almost committed the country! It is to be carried out, moreover, at a moment's notice. I really believe this to be the maddest and wildest scheme ever presented to Parliament. However, the subject will come up for discussion; we are simply on the fringe of it now. The duty of members is to express their opinions; some may do well, and some may do badly; but we all do it to the best of our ability, anyhow. My object in calling attention to this question is to arouse public opinion, so that the country may not be led heedlessly into wild schemes for which it will be very sorry later. The project to continue the Morgans railway to Laverton I entirely support. I care not what part of the country a development scheme may be designed to benefit, I shall always support the granting of facilities to miners, pioneers, and explorers, so long as the money can possibly be found

without involving the State in bankruptcy. I can fairly claim that every scheme of the kind has had my support for the last 11 years; indeed, I am proud to make the claim. I do not know much about the Collic line, but the Minister for Lands has stated that good agricultural land is to be found between the point at which the proposed railway leaves the Eastern Goldfields line and the point at which it is to join the Great Southern.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; I said between Collic and the Great Southern Railway.

MR. CONNOR: If the line is not to join the Eastern Goldfields Railway, how can it supply coal to the goldfields?

MEMBER: The hon. member has not read the Governor's Speech.

MR. CONNOR: I have read the Speech carefully. Does not the Minister state that the proposed Collic line would open up good agricultural country?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes.

MR. CONNOR: Then I qualify my previous statement by saying that if we can afford to build the line we should build it, because the opening up of good agricultural land is of distinct advantage to the State. We want people to settle on our land, and railway construction through good agricultural country is the best means of promoting land settlement, unless the Premier's new-fangled scheme of motor cars should be brought into operation. A question of some importance to Fremantle is that of the Jandakot Railway: at least, it is not the Jandakot Railway. I know a bit about that country, and I also know a little of the district through which the alternative route passes. I refer to the district between Owen's Anchorage and Jarrahdale. I may claim to speak with authority, because a section of the line has been already built, and because I can take to myself the credit of having got it built. In Fremantle, that section is known as "Connor's Railway." "Connor's railway" was built to take stock away from Owen's Anchorage. Now, there has appeared in the papers a good deal of correspondence in connection with this subject, and there has been one letter which rather surprised me. It was signed by the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes). In it the hon. member tells us, or tells the public of whom I am

one—or I may say he infers—that his influence with the Government is such that he would not allow the suggested railway to be built from Owen's Anchorage to Armadale.

MR. HOLMES (in explanation) : I give that statement a most emphatic denial. I never wrote any such thing, nor has any such statement appeared in print with my name attached to it.

MR. CONNOR : Anyhow, I saw it in print.

MEMBER : Then you cannot read.

MR. CONNOR : My eyesight may not be too good, but anyhow I read that. Fortunately I cut the paragraph out of the paper, and I shall show it to the hon. member later.

MR. HOLMES : When you examine the cutting, you will find that it is signed by J. A. Hicks.

MR. CONNOR : No ; by J. J. Holmes. Of course, I acquit the hon. member of having written the letter, but I can only go by what I read. The letter states that the hon. member's influence with Ministers is such that the Government would not think of letting the railway go to Armadale. I have to point out, however, that, after all, railways are built not for the purpose of improving unimproved estates, but to follow population, to go where the people have settled, and where the people ask that they should go. I believe the intention of the Government is to take that railway to Jarrahdale Junction, and I tell the Government that if they do so it will be done in defiance of the votes of a proportion of this House. I believe the proportion of votes which the Government will have to face on that question will be a majority.

THE PREMIER : Oh, shocking !

MR. CONNOR : The Premier jumped at that, and I knew that he would jump. I thought he would come at me, and he came. I have no desire to be personal, but talking in a strictly political sense, I may call the Premier a political trout, who jumps at every fly offered him.

THE PREMIER : At every political blowfly.

MR. CONNOR : The Premier will jump at any gaudy-coloured fly. The other day the hon. gentleman told a number of people that if they wanted anything they must act on the principle of hustle, hustle, hustle. Later the

Premier went to Jandakot, and because the people there hustled, he told them they "had better be satisfied with half a loaf than get no bread." That is the position of the political hustler. When he finds people hustling for what they have a right to get, he says, "I do not like people to hustle ; I like people to act on the principle of taking half a loaf in preference to getting no bread."

THE PREMIER : Don't you think the advice good ?

MR. CONNOR : One work which must be carried out as soon as we can possibly afford it is a railway inland in the North-West. I will not say whether the railway should run from Roebourne, or Port Hedland, or Wyndham ; but the people of the North want some communication which will carry them more quickly than does travelling behind a bullock team at the rate of five or six miles a day. The people of the North want something which will run quickly, whether it be a tramway or a narrow-gauge railway ; and that work has got to be done. I was highly pleased at the Colonial Secretary's statement to his old constituents—we are always kind to our old constituents—that he agreed that the construction of a railway to Marble Bar was necessary, and would be a good thing for the country. Undoubtedly, it must be done. If the present Government can undertake the work the House will support it ; but if the Government cannot undertake it, then it must be done by other means. This is the first time in 11 years that I have risen in the House to speak on behalf of private enterprise in railway construction, and I now say that if the Government will not or cannot build the railway in the North-West, then private enterprise must be allowed to do so, on fair lines. I regret to have to say that in such a case the work must be carried out by private enterprise, but I see no alternative if the Government do not undertake it. Railway extension is always necessary in new countries. In that way the Americans have developed their country, and we cannot follow a better example. We cannot offer a better means of advancement for the State as a whole than we do by enabling the people to travel as fast as possible. Next, I turn to the question of railway administration. During the course of the very watery

speech which we have had from the Minister for Railways, we did not hear a single word about the administration of the Railway Department. The hon. gentleman did not inform us whether the railways are paying or losing. Surely the House ought to know whether or not they are paying; surely some official intimation ought to be given. True, the report of the Commissioner of Railways has not been published; but nevertheless we are supposed to discuss the affairs of the country in this debate on the Address-in-Reply. Had any other member of the Government but the Minister for Railways risen to speak, I should not have referred to the matter; but here we have a Minister for Railways speaking for hours without ever mentioning whether or not the railways are paying.

MR. BURGESS: What does the Speech say?

MR. CONNOR: The Minister has not condescended to tell us whether or not the new Commissioner has been a success. We want to know.

MR. BURGESS: How are the railway rates going to be reduced if the Commissioner is not a success?

MR. CONNOR: Produce is going down, and that will reduce the rates. I have a personal knowledge of instances of very bad management in connection with the railways. I could refer to half-a-dozen points—possibly they may be considered points of detail, but details in the aggregate are important, and involve success or failure—wherein the management might be materially improved. It is a question of detail; you either win or lose. At Fremantle, the terminus of the railway, where more passengers get in than at any station except at Perth, the train is backed into the station 60 yards from the barrier. The porter at the barrier sings out "Hurry up" and another fellow whistles, and you see women and children running 60 yards, when two or three puffs from the engine would bring the train down as far as the barrier. It is the worst-managed station in the State. This matter has been brought under the notice of the people who are responsible for it, but the same thing is continued every day. The sanitary arrangements of the station are disgraceful; absolutely positively disgusting. If I were to go into the

question of rates I could unfold a tale; it might be looked upon as a personal matter, but I could unfold a tale. Without notice or anything being gazetted or recorded or approved of by the superior officers, the rates are altered on the railways times out of number. I told the Minister for Railways about this, and I can show him absolute proof of it. We expected when the Minister spoke he would tell us something about the position of the railways, because, after all, they are the greatest asset of the State. But he got up and talked water, water, water, without giving us any information about the railways. There is a little matter that strikes me just as I go along. We are accused in this country of not providing sufficient amusement for the people, for not providing places of recreation: may I suggest to the Premier the making of a road from Leederville to South Fremantle. It would not cost much money, and it would be the means of advertising the country and be a source of pleasure to the people of the State. Railways are all very well in a way; we want them as soon as we can get them. One item referred to by the member for East Fremantle to-night, which to my mind—and I am speaking as one who should know—is of more importance to the country to-day than even the extension of railways, is the building of a dock at Fremantle. It is a national work and an absolute necessity. It would create a necessity for skilled labour; it would be the means of bringing to this country the class of people we want to settle here; it would settle a great many difficulties in connection with the shipping on the coast which exist to-day; it would make for Fremantle the name of a great port which it is not in the proper sense of the word to-day. I hope this will be undertaken immediately by the Government. I believe a site has been suggested at East Fremantle—I hope there will be no more secret purchases; we do not want to see any more of that business. Undoubtedly and unquestionably what we must depend on in the country is mining; later on it will be agriculture, but to-day we are depending on mining. I do not think we attend sufficiently to the people who have initiated the work in connection with mining: I do not think we give

sufficient encouragement to prospectors. I do not think we give tenure to the man who goes out and finds a mine a long way away from where any other mining operations are being carried on. When a prospector finds a mine he has a right to the freehold of that mine. I do not think there should be any doubt about that. A prospecting area should be given absolutely to the man, not on conditions of working or anything else. In America they do this.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS : They are sorry for it in America.

MR. CONNOR : If they are sorry for it, we know the country is more powerful than we are likely to be. They have done this in the past and they are doing it still. A man goes out into the wilderness, finds a mine or an auriferous area and proves it to be gold-bearing. Portion of that area should be given absolutely to the man as a freehold.

MR. YELVERTON : No.

MR. CONNOR : Oh yes ; it does not suit my second party here. More encouragement should be given to prospecting in this country. Men should be encouraged to risk their lives in finding a mine. I am glad to say the Minister for Mines has been helping prospecting parties by giving them camels to go out and look for new country : that is one of the best things that can be done, and it does not cost much money. Although the Government claim that they started Government batteries, they did not. The Government batteries were initiated by the Forrest Government, when I was one of their humble supporters. I give the present Government all the credit possible for carrying out the policy, and I say, go on, you cannot do too much. The Government cannot spend too much money in erecting public batteries in mining districts to help people who cannot put up batteries for themselves. I say, go farther and put up, if necessary, cyanide plants, which are not very expensive. I now come to a question which has been mentioned in the House more than once, and which was mentioned to-night by the member for East Fremantle. It may be new to some members who have not been so long in the House as I have, but it is a perennial question which has been coming up year after year, session after session ;

I refer to the tick question. I follow the member for East Fremantle in his remarks on this. What is the use of the restrictions we have at the present time ? What are they for ? We have been bringing cattle down from Kimberley for the the last ten years—I surely know all about this. There is not a railway station in Western Australia, there is not a town of any importance in Western Australia that ticked cattle have not been distributed in and delivered in for the last seven or eight years, except during the term they were prohibited. There is not a place where cattle have not been sent to, and to-day ticked cattle are being distributed all over the place. To-day they are taken as fat cattle to the gold-fields. What is the use of the regulations and the restrictions. They are the greatest travesty on common sense that ever occurred in the world. There is absolutely no reason or sense in the restrictions. May I tell members—I wish to be honest with them—if the Government take the restrictions off, if they remove them to-morrow, I lose by it. If the tick restrictions are kept on I am richer personally ; still I ask for the prohibition to be removed. Why am I the richer if the restrictions are kept on ? Because it stops the small man from going into the trade. At present the trade is in the hands of a few people : they deserve it, they own it, for they bought it at a very dear price. It is in the hands of a few people, and if the restrictions are kept on the trade will remain in their hands. If the restrictions are taken off, it will enable the small man to go into this trade. It gives a possibility of stocking the country down here, which with the restrictions cannot be done. As far as fat stock are concerned, to me personally—and I want to be clear on this—take the restrictions off and you do an injury to my pocket ; still I advocate taking off the restrictions all the same. As long as the trade is in the hands of two or three—three it is—it will stay there. Take the restrictions off and you give an opportunity to the Adelaide Steamship Co. and to other shipping companies to give freight to the smaller men. Keep the restrictions on, and the small man cannot come in ; they cannot afford to build yards at Owen's Anchorage to hold ticked cattle. I want to tell members that I am advocating

what will go against me, but what is in the interests of my constituents. Go to Owen's Anchorage and see how the restrictions are carried out there. Why it is cruelty to the animals: they are right up in the bog, I won't say how far. If you keep the restrictions on, you keep meat dear. The Premier has gone, I am sorry to say. I was going to refer to him. The prohibition of Kimberley cattle was discussed when the late lamented Mr. Leake sat in Opposition, with Mr. Simpson, Mr. James, Mr. Illingworth, and one or two more. At that time their policy was cheap meat for the people. They knew there was no harm in letting the cattle in; it was then their policy to say, "Do away with the restrictions and let the cattle come in;" but the Government did not do it, because the member for East Fremantle and the member for West Kimberley sat on the Government side of the House. The supply of meat in this State is rather an important matter. People must have fresh meat. Those who are in the trade generally are bringing down from East Kimberley 20,000 fat bullocks a year. I want to know what the people would do without these cattle. There is only one thing that should be done, and I mentioned this to the Minister for Lands. Either prohibit the cattle or adopt regulations which suit the country, like Queensland has. I would bring the cattle down and let them go.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** We are just about to experiment in that direction.

**MR. CONNOR:** I hope the Minister will do that. It has been going on for 10 years now.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** There is nothing on record to show that.

**MR. CONNOR:** There is another question which was touched on by the member for East Fremantle, and it is one which this country has got to face sooner or later; the carriage by cold storage of mutton and beef grown in the northern portion of this country. The cattle will not continue to be carried in steamers alive; it is unnatural; it should not be so. Science has provided a means by which cattle can be killed in the far North without loss of weight, be frozen or chilled, and brought down here in steamers. The House must decide whether that is to be done by the Government or

by private enterprise. My opinion is that the Government should step in now and take it in hand; make it a national work and a national asset; make it of some use to the State. Step in before some London company comes along—I know negotiations for such an enterprise are at present proceeding—and do not allow another huge monopoly to grow up in this country, a monopoly which will soon arise if the Government are not careful. Personally I should prefer it to arise, because I should benefit by it; but I am now talking as a public man, and must speak as I feel, conscientiously in the public interests. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) agreed with all that, but he objected to cattle being dipped and sent to West Kimberley. He objected to a dip at Hall's Creek. I should like to know why the hon. member objected to that.

**MR. HOLMES:** I did not mention a dip.

**MR. CONNOR:** He objected to ticked cattle going through West Kimberley. Now if a dip is good enough in Queensland and in South Australia—and I assure hon. members that the practice there at present is to dip cattle and let them go—surely it ought to be good enough for us.

**MR. HOLMES:** It is good enough to experiment here first, before putting cattle into clean herds in West Kimberley.

**MR. CONNOR:** We have experimented, and have proved our experiments to be successful. [MR. HOLMES: No.] The hon. member knows we have. I was there with him when we saw those experiments successfully conducted. But even if we had not experimented, surely what is good enough for Queensland and South Australia—more important cattle States than this—is good enough for us.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** There are no dips in South Australia. I had a wire to that effect from the Chief Inspector of Stock.

**MR. CONNOR:** Well, he does not know. There is a dip in the Northern Territory, and that is in South Australia. Cold storage should be provided in Fremantle also, and I should say on the south side of the river. Some time ago it was suggested that it be established on the north side of the river; but that would be useless, because if the Govern-

ment built on the north, as I believe they intend to build, they would have to get a boat to bring across the Fremantle supplies, and would, moreover, be out of touch with the railway system. The proper site is on the south side, somewhere near Victoria Wharf. I have spoken at length on this matter of cold storage and on the tick question. I tell members that if they do not bestir themselves, and make the conditions of this trade such that the people will get some benefit from it, South African firms will walk in and take away the trade by purchasing the supplies which are at present coming to Fremantle. How can they do it? Because their works will be very extensive, and it will pay growers better, although they sell their stock at a lower price, to freeze it in large quantities at Wyndham—about the nearest port to South Africa—and take the cattle from Wyndham to that country. I am much in earnest on this matter, which ought to be fully discussed, and is well worthy the attention of the Government. If the expression is Parliamentary, I will give the Minister for Lands a tip. I will suggest to him that the best thing he can do to develop this country generally and the North in particular is to promote water conservation. New South Wales has arrived at the conclusion that water must be provided for her stock on account of the droughts. We may have a drought in this country at any time. Given a drought in Kimberley for a year, and no fat stock will come south. The people here would then be in a particularly bad way. I do not know whence they would get their supplies. The country would be benefited if the Minister could put down trial artesian bores in good pastoral country that is not absolutely certain of rainfall. Having put down a bore and obtained water, make the cost a tax on the land adjacent. Provided no water were found, then the bore was an experiment of the Government to which I am sure Parliament would not object. The Premier, I see, has gone away; yet one of his favourite subjects now crops up—the question of education. Referring to the Speech, I do not think the idea regarding secondary schools a good one for this country at present. There are many reasons for and against all such proposals;

but I will give two reasons which I think ought to be sufficient against them. First, there is no necessity for secondary schools; and second and most important, the country cannot afford them. If any member wishes to know why they are not required, I can go into that; and if he wishes to know why we cannot afford them, I will refer him to the Treasurer. If we look to other countries for examples, we shall find them in plenty. Take Victoria, where, after spending nearly a million pounds in a similar experiment, good, tried, and valuable servants had to be discharged in great numbers; and if we take even that advanced country, New Zealand, where the educational system attained such perfection that the people thought they were becoming the greatest nation in the world, we find the expense nearly brought them into financial trouble. If we take these examples, we shall see that the Government scheme is not practicable. We have not the money to spend on it; and I think the idea must be dropped by the Government. We can look back to the time, some years ago, when there was a great fight in this House on the question, and can think things out. If we require higher education we can get it by paying for it; and the only manner in which this country can afford to pay for higher education is by paying for results. If we pay for results we shall get the required education, because the boys will attend and get their teachers to bring them on till they attain a certain standard. Never mind which boy it is; so long as he attains that standard, you pay the teacher.

MR. BURGESS: What! Push on a few likely schools and let the rest drop out?

MR. CONNOR: I cannot understand the hon. member. As regards a University, I support the Government proposal. I would not support it for the purpose of providing what is called higher education, namely the granting of diplomas to bachelors of arts, and so on. We need a University on a more practical model. We need teachers of mineralogy, geology, and scientific agriculture; and another very important subject is forestry. We have a commission sitting now to inquire into our timber industry; but we find that our Forestry Department cost us for the year 1902 £4,301, while the revenue was £18,000. In 1898 the revenue was

£30,000, and the cost £3,356. I cannot find any use for a department which progresses in that way. Another thing: it is necessary that we should replant where all this timber has been cut down. The first time I stood in this House I had the honour of seconding the Address-in-Reply, and I remember one matter on which I spoke was the efficient conservation of forests and replanting. Where a tree is cut down it should be incumbent upon whoever cuts it down to put a certain number of trees in its place. A perennial idea has come before this House in connection with explosives. I think every Session of Parliament during the time I have been here since explosives magazines have been established I have objected to their being there. I told the House of my own knowledge of a swagman coming in from Rockingham and lighting his fire under one of these magazines. We have had experience which ought to have proved to the Government that they were very foolish in allowing the magazines to stay so long, and in my opinion it is absolutely criminal on the part of the Government that they have not more protection now. In fact the magazines ought to be taken away.

**THE PREMIER:** How did the swagman get under a magazine?

**MR. CONNOR:** He got alongside one.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** You said "under."

**MR. CONNOR:** I could get under one, and I am bigger than he is. They are built on piles. I am down there oftener than the hon. gentleman, and have seen them. The policy of this Government is to have cheap meat for the people. One of the ways to get cheap meat is by giving facilities to a certain extent. There has been on the Estimates now for the last three or four Parliaments a sum to provide a road from Rockingham right into the abattoirs at Owen's Anchorage, yet that road has never been established, but some influence has been brought to bear about two or three hundred yards away where a lime-burner starts, and he can do it. The people who wanted the abattoirs offered to build the road themselves and to pay the money, but the Minister for Works, who is not now in his seat, refused to take it. That is the way in which this great Government running

Western Australia so well is treating the people. There is the question of the Bunbury harbour work, where it is proposed that we shall spend, I think £120,000. That is a pretty large sum. If it is for the purpose solely of exportation of timber and it is justifiable to keep the trade going for some years, I will support it. But we have been told that it is also for the purpose of exporting Collie coal. It is no good to build a harbour at Bunbury for exporting Collie coal, for unfortunately we have proved that Collie coal put into a steamer is almost certain of spontaneous combustion. In the steamer "Tangier," to which my people were agents, Collie coal was on board and three fires started on that steamer. We cannot, under the circumstances, afford to spend £120,000 on Bunbury harbour to make it so that we may export coal that will never be exported. I shall certainly not support the expenditure of that money.

**MR. HAYWARD:** They are getting a different class of coal.

**MR. CONNOR:** I am pleased to hear that. If that is so, I am glad to withdraw all I have said. A matter which particularly demands the attention of this House is a simplification of the bankruptcy laws. We know that when an unfortunate man cannot pay his way, and has to appeal to the Bankruptcy Court it is absolute and utter ruin. The red tapeism and the details it is necessary to get through, with the stationery wasted are very disgusting and very annoying to business people. I would ask the Premier to bear that in mind, and have some alteration made so that it would be easier for the people who unfortunately have to take that refuge.

**THE PREMIER:** What we want to do is to save people, by good policy, from becoming bankrupt.

**MR. CONNOR:** There is the question of the Royal Commission in connection with the Public Service. I do not know whether members have really grasped what this farce is likely to turn out to be. I do not know why the Government have not the backbone to stop it. They have told us they will not carry out the recommendations of the Commission. For goodness sake then, if they are not going to do that, get rid of the Commission. I cannot help, on this occasion, which ma-

be my last appearance here, stating that I regret the fact that the late Chief Inspector of Stock, Mr. Morton Craig, was asked to resign the position ; because I say he has done good service to this country. He has been anything but a friend to me, but still I admire the man for his iron-bound character ; a man who, in the face of opposition, took the position which he believed to be a just one, and was not afraid to carry it out. I think the country treated him badly. In connection with the "Julia Percy" steamer, which is going to cost this country £5,500 a year, I think for three years, it may be all very well for a new green politician or statesman—possibly I must say statesman—to go and subsidise a steamer, to run a new company, people who were not here before, against people who have traded this coast with their steamers, and have lost money in running steamers here ; but I say the matter should have been open to competition.

**THE PREMIER :** Which steamship lost money by running along that coast ?

**MR. CONNOR :** The "Blue Star."

**THE PREMIER :** That was only here a short time.

**MR. CONNOR :** It has been running here for nine years. I think there is a worse mistake than that. There is this fact brought, I believe, to bear, that "Julia Percy" cargo gets through lading to stations on the Government railways. I do not know whether that is so. I have been told by a fairly good authority that such is the case. I repeat that I do not say it is ; but I assert that if such a thing is entertained by the Government they must wipe it off ; they must not do it. It would not stand the light of day. We could not, as business men, allow such a thing to occur, and we will not allow it in this House.

**THE PREMIER :** Will you ask the gentlemen who told you that whether it is a fact that the combine are penalising all those who patronise the "Julia Percy ?"

**MR. CONNOR :** I do not care. Even then I tell the Premier that we cannot possibly allow one company by the exercise of a certain degree of influence—we know a certain degree of influence was brought to bear—to secure the contract. I believe, anyhow, that influence was brought to bear, although I do not know it positively. I shall not tell a lie about

it. I do not say absolutely that it is so, but I believe it is so.

**THE PREMIER :** You are most credulous.

**MR. CONNOR :** If it is so, it should not be so. I do not intend to attack the Government, but I will warn them—warning is better than attacking—that the country is not prepared to swallow any more such appointments as were made in connection with the establishment of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. I warn Ministers that if they bring down to this House another Bill to justify appointments which violate the Constitution of the country, which prostitute the Constitution of the country, the House will not stand it. Neither is the country likely to stand it. I ask Ministers to remember that, without attacking them. Next, I turn to the question of electoral reform and redistribution of seats. The Electoral Bill is before us, and the Redistribution of Seats Bill has yet to come. When the latter measure is before the House, I shall be prepared to support it in so far as it may be just and right, and in the interests of the country. I have said before that I shall not support a Bill purely on a population basis. Such a Bill is impossible, because the State has interests in the north country and elsewhere which require conservation and watching. Those interests must have a certain power in the country, in order that they may be conserved. I shall support any fair and reasonable Bill, even if I myself should be the first to go. I suppose hon. members would say, "It is a good job ; he was a jolly nuisance." I am prepared to accept whatever a majority of the House may consider right and just. Now I come to absolutely the last subject I have to speak on. I wish to impress on the Premier the necessity for conserving what little State rights we retain under federation. Let us preserve those rights and maintain them by every possible means. Let us not permit them to be encroached on. We know there is a tendency, since the advent of federation, to deprive the smaller people of power and to give it to the bigger. We have unfortunately lost a good deal of our power, but we still have a goodly heritage ; and I urge the Premier to do all in his power to preserve such State rights as remain to us. No man in this State is more capable of doing so than the man



who at present leads the country. I say this although I slate him now and then. It is not a good thing to let the Premier believe that one will follow him blindly. I urge him, in conclusion, as emphatically as I can, to keep, preserve, conserve, and maintain whatever State rights Western Australia has—I am sorry to have to say it—as against the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia.

On motion by Mr. BUTCHER, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

**THE PREMIER:** In moving that the House do now adjourn, I express the hope that the debate will conclude tomorrow. If between the adjournment and our meeting again hon. members will look through their speeches and condense them, we can finish the debate tomorrow evening. The country will not suffer by reason of the suggested condensation of speeches.

The House adjourned accordingly at 10:55 o'clock until the next day.

### Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 29th July, 1903.

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**THE ACTING PRESIDENT** took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

On motion by the **COLONIAL SECRETARY**, the Acting President and hon. members proceeded to Government House to meet members of the Legislative Assembly in a joint sitting of both Houses, for the purpose of electing a Senator to the

vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Norman K. Ewing.

At 5:15 o'clock, business resumed.

**THE ACTING PRESIDENT** announced the result of the joint sitting of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. [See report of joint sitting.]

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY—PRESENTATION.

**THE ACTING PRESIDENT** announced that he had received the following communication from His Excellency the Governor:—

**MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,**—

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

FRED. G. D. BEDFORD,  
Governor.

#### MOTION—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by the **COLONIAL SECRETARY**, leave of absence for one month granted to the Hon. M. L. Moss, on the ground of urgent private business.

#### BREAD BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from previous sitting.

**HON. A. G. JENKINS (North-East):** My only object in addressing the House is to say that having read the Bill I can see very little to object to in it, with the exception of one or two slight amendments which can be effected in Committee. I am fortified in my opinion by gentlemen who represent the bread industry. Some of the chief master bakers in Perth take exception to two clauses in the Bill. Clause 14 states:

No person shall obstruct or hinder any search authorised by this Act, or the seizure on any search of anything authorised to be seized.

The master bakers think that the word "wilful" should be inserted, as this breach of the law might be committed unknowingly. The other matter is contained in Clause 16, which says that no person employed in the trade or calling of a baker shall make or bake any bread on Sunday before the hour of 7 o'clock p.m. If that clause is carried, it will be absolutely impossible for the master