

desire; but if we are to listen to the member for Mt. Magnet, every member on this side of the House would seem to be a political scoundrel. Read his speech in the morning, and you will find suggestions of wrong-doing in every direction. I venture to think the country is sick of that kind of thing. The people do not want us to hurl charges against each other. They want the business of the country to be reasonably debated. Criticism is healthy, but it should be just. On the whole, with the exception of one or two slips made by the hon. member, I think the debate has proceeded on fair and reasonable lines. I trust that, before the end of the session, many members on the other side of the House will find the Government policy more commendable than they find it at the present moment.

On motion by *Mr. Holman*, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9-31 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 11th July, 1907.

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

Prayers.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Statistics; 2, Marriage Act, Amendment; introduced by the Colonial Secretary.

DEBATE—ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Fourth day.

Resumed from the previous day.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East): I am pleased to have the opportunity of speaking to the Address-in-Reply, and have much pleasure in congratulating the country and the Ministry of the day on the optimistic character of the Speech. Unfortunately it does not seem to me that the man in the street looks with such hopeful eyes at the general prospects ahead of us; so the Speech should be the means of conveying to him an altogether altered tone and assure him that there are still great prospects ahead of us. If we all can look at things in the same light, it will help the Government considerably in fostering the many industries that are mentioned in the Speech. In the speeches that have been delivered by members a fair amount of attention has been bestowed on the important question of immigration, and we are not alone in this country anxious to encourage settlers to come to our shores, but we are pleased to see that the Federal Parliament recognises it is of the utmost importance to the whole of Australia, and people in the old country are quite willing to back it up. There seems to be a fair tangle in regard to the matter, because of the different claims the various States have to put forth, especially when we hear of a Federal Minister making the statements that have been attributed to him. It is a very serious matter indeed for us. We are paying an Agent General in London to advertise our country throughout the length and breadth, not only of Great Britain, but of the whole world. Yet while we are advertising our resources and are paying an Agent General in England to send us immigrants, we have a Federal Minister condemning our country. We also have other traitors in the camp who have not backed up the endeavours of some of our own people. It must be extremely hard in a country like Great Britain to persuade people to give up the livelihood they have been following for many years, to break up their homes and face the great distance that lies between us, and cut themselves off from all home ties and start out on a new life. They first of all have to put

between themselves and their old home and friends the 16,000 miles of ocean. Naturally it takes people a considerable time to make up their minds whether they will face the difficulties they have ahead of them. We can readily understand after they do embark it is a serious matter for their consideration as to what will become of them after landing on new shores. They may have in their pockets all the advice tendered to them by the Agent General, and the assurances by him that they will have all necessary attention, and this undoubtedly gives them great confidence. But still greater confidence they must have when they know they have in their pockets letters of introduction to one or another important person, and they feel that when they present those letters of introduction, all their interests will be looked after and that they will have a friend at once. It seems to me that we have a serious matter for consideration brought before us in that connection quite recently by settlers stating, and I think it was not contradicted, that they had met with difficulties. They had come here with letters of introduction, not to Sir William Lyne, but a very important personage here, who had filled the position of Agent General, had been Premier of this State, and knew the conditions of living at home; and these immigrants naturally anticipated that they would be placed in the right way of acquiring land, that the person to whom they came would be well acquainted with all the avenues and services required to place themselves on the land that the Agent General at home had told them about. But when we find they are advised that the Government in this country have no good land for them to go upon, and are told to walk across the street to the representative of the Midland Railway, where they can acquire land, but with totally different conditions from those which they had been advised of by the representatives of the State in the country from which they came, we can well understand they would feel they have grievances against the country and also the system which has been adopted of treating them on their arrival here. Without doubt this treatment is not of the best, and it behoves us therefore to take a lesson from these examples and

see that better arrangements are made for receiving immigrants, particularly when we know their susceptibilities, which are only natural in people coming from a country so far away. Several speeches have also been made with regard to the treatment of some of our own people, in addition to those arriving from overseas, by the settlers here when they go into the country and take positions on the different farms. We have been told that those men have received most drastic treatment at the hands of the settlers, and I for one must join with those who enter a protest against statements of that kind being hurled against men now settled in the country. I must acknowledge that the farm hand who is employed by these people does not have clean sheets supplied to him every night on his bed, he does not get his bed made for him in the morning, and his boots are not cleaned; but in this he is placed in no different position from the settler himself, who finds it a very difficult matter indeed to obtain anyone to undertake such services. The majority of the settlers in the country have to make their own beds, and it is almost impossible for them to obtain anyone to do the cooking even for the hands employed on the farms. The experience of nearly all the settlers is that their wives have to do the cooking, and I may say that they do it very well. The position is that the people who are needed to perform these services will not leave the city and prefer to accept one-quarter of the salary that they would receive in the country so long as they are able to reside in the city or large towns. In such circumstances, therefore, the people in the country are not to blame because they cannot provide those comforts for the farm hands which seem to be expected. Some of us in the country feel somewhat hurt at these statements being hurled at us. Every now and then we hear of there being unemployed in the city and are told that the Government are finding employment for these men by starting ringbarking and other works for their benefit. Personally I do not object to the Government providing that means of employing the surplus labour, but we know very well that it is almost impossible sometimes for the owners of property to get the

work which has to be done on their farms carried out owing to the lack of labour and the fact that the Government is entering into competition with them by the employment of the surplus hands. It appears that it is only necessary for a man to get a few agitators together, who shout out that there is a surplus of labour on the markets, in order to get the Government to start relief works for them. We know well that there are numbers of farmers who want to carry out important works, but cannot get the men to undertake them. Then when they do obtain men they find that the hands will only work for a few weeks and that as soon as they get a few pounds together they go away to the hotel at the nearest town where they "knock down" their cheque, and in addition to doing themselves a considerable amount of harm, set a bad example to the young men and the new settlers in the district. It is a very easy matter for these new settlers to drop into the same groove; but I would like to qualify this statement by saying that to the credit of many of these immigrants, they promise to be some of the finest settlers among us. Personally I have come in contact with a good many of these men and the only drawback to their becoming really first class settlers is that they do not bring enough capital with them. Several of these men whom I have met realise this only too well themselves. They are quite satisfied to work honestly and well, but they have come to the conclusion that it would be of no use for them to enter upon the difficulties that they see ahead of them, and I am afraid that in many cases they will return to the country from whence they came. I must give the Government credit for the recent steps they have taken towards giving practical advice to farmers by introducing the best strains of dairy cattle from the other States. I understand that the Government have recently engaged a dairy expert from New Zealand. In referring to this I would like to point out that they have made the appointment without any reference to the country or to the Civil Service Commissioner. At various times men have been introduced to this State, and it seems to me strange that the Government should have gone to New Zealand,

where the climate and the conditions are totally different from what they are here, to obtain a man for the position. It would have been very much better if they had applied first of all in our own State, where there are many men who have probably had to undergo retrenchment or suffer reverses, but who possess considerable knowledge and who also hold the highest diplomas from the various agricultural institutions of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. Had these men to whom I have referred known that an appointment of the kind which has been made was being considered by the Government, they would have certainly applied for the position. With all this talent available in the State itself, it is strange that a large salary should be paid for a man who knows nothing of local conditions. The idea of appointing a man to the position of dairy inspector is a very good one, and the Government were right to go outside the State if they knew that there was not a man here at the present time who could give good advice on the question of the establishment of a dairying industry. Why did not the local men get a chance of applying? [*Hon. W. Maley: They are too slow*]. I do not know that they are too slow, and certainly they were not given an opportunity of applying, for the appointment was made without the knowledge of anyone. The Hon. Mr. Maley might be thinking that there are no men in the Agricultural Department suitable for the position, but the reference I am making is to men who are outside that branch of the service. At various times men have been employed at different State agricultural farms. It seems to me that in connection with this matter an enormous amount of money has been wasted. The whole scheme has been nothing more than a mistake in administration, carried over from one Government to another. The mistake has been made ever since the inception of these farms. It was not the original idea that they should be turned into State agricultural farms, but rather that we should start in the various districts experimental stations, without costly buildings and machinery and without undue expenditure, with the idea of teaching the people in those various centres how a farm could be managed

there. They should have been no more than experimental stations, and all to be under the control of one man who would travel from one to another in the various districts to discover what crops could be profitably grown by the farmers, and at any rate be able to show them numbers of new forms of plant life and the treatment that they should receive, so that people settled in the neighbourhood might have a practical object lesson close at hand. However, under different Administrations the plan was completely altered, and each of these institutions has been turned into some sort of State farm, college, or other teaching establishment, with costly buildings, an enormous quantity of machinery, and expensive stock; and we find on a few hundred acres a sum of money spent sufficient to equip a farm of ten times the size. I understand that various alterations have been made in most of these establishments, but the same chaos is probably rampant there as existed in the past. In my opinion, if we are to do anything of that kind, the Government should set apart a large area of land for the purpose. In spite of their idea that farming can be successfully carried on with 160 or 500 acres, it would be as well to start a model farm on a 10,000 or 20,000-acre allotment, where they could establish a nucleus of what would eventually become an agricultural college or teaching establishment. On such an area they could place a few of the new settlers whom they are introducing. If the institution were endowed with a large area of land it would probably be successful, but it cannot succeed if managed so expensively and recklessly as our State farms have been in the past. The freezing works to be erected in the North-West, mentioned in paragraph 10, have appeared in various other speeches by His Excellency. [*Member:* They are for Copley.] I do not mind whom they are for; all depends on the system adopted. I do not know the whole of the arrangements being entered into. But we know the deplorable condition of affairs recently caused by the long-continued timber strike, which it seems to me was due to the fact that a majority of our people desire that the timber industry, and all other large industries, should be national-

ised. If that is the general feeling of the community, I approve of the idea that we should nationalise these freezing works from their inception. Let the State itself step in, and nationalise such industries or leave them alone. If the country intends these industries to be nationalised, then undoubtedly the State should start by nationalising the freezing works. I do not know what method is to be adopted; but probably, whether the freezing works are for Mr. Copley or for some other firm, if the country has a big share in the undertaking, the private firm will be prevented from obtaining a monopoly. As the Government will advance the money they will have some control, and the public can make free use of the works, which will probably be better managed by private employees than by State officials. If we are to nationalise that industry, let us do so before private enterprise gets a complete hold of it and cannot be disturbed. The Government might consider the nationalisation of the wine industry. I see no mention of this in the Speech, but I think the subject comes well within the scope of paragraph 10. [*Hon. J. A. Thomson:* Socialism!] Well, the country is going in for socialism; and seeing that both parties in the country are practically of the one opinion, what else can be done? There seems to me practically no difference between the ins and the outs. If the country requires the nationalisation of industries, better do it thoroughly before it is too late. I would strongly advise the country to make up its mind to a policy, and to nationalise the wine industry. We know that this country is the home of the vine and the fig tree; it is practically another Palestine; and I would advise the country to spend on nationalisation something like five millions of money within the next few years. One of the biggest industries in the country is the timber industry. We know there are many people who would like to take that industry out of the hands of the company who, by utilising an immense capital, have sent agents throughout the world and have secured and built up the trade. And it seems to me the only means of successfully growing wine is to be found in nationalisation. We know well that we can plant a vine or even a slip of a vine anywhere in our

wine-growing districts; we can throw it into the ground and good fruit will result. Only by a large expenditure of capital, such as a private company would provide, can we capture the markets of the world; and without that expenditure we cannot even dream of making our vine industry a success. We know that our many vigneronns cannot find a market for their product. We see quantities of wine imported here, though the local producers cannot sell their wines; and for what reason?

Hon. J. A. Wright: The imported is the better article.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: If it is better, how can we take our wine to the Paris or New Zealand exhibitions, and other exhibitions held throughout the world, and bear away prizes from our competitors? In this country we can produce wine as good as any other in the world. The only trouble is, we are not producing it in sufficient quantities or of the one quality. There are so many growers who have conflicting ideas of how wine is to be made; the different growers make wine on different days, and the temperatures are altogether different; and growers have no capital to provide large cellarage accommodation; and if they have capital they will not spend it, for it seems to me that the country as a whole does not give any adequate inducement to the capitalist who would sink his money in this industry. The company I have just mentioned utilised their capital to build up the timber industry; and once it is seen that there is a good asset, that good markets have been opened and that the industry is fairly well launched, the community begin to cast longing eyes on that fine concern, and talk about its nationalisation. The idea of confiscation gets abroad. Honestly, I think that the Government should give their earnest attention to nationalising the wine industry. Let us look on the whole State as a company, and spend during the next ten years something like five millions of money in bringing the industry to the front, a million of which would have to be spent in sending out agents to seek markets for the wine as it is being made here. It is only by a large expenditure that we can provide up-to-date cellarage and turn out large quantities of wine of

the same grade. Without large quantities of a like grade we cannot attempt to capture foreign markets. Paragraph 16 of the Speech appeals to me, though I do not wish to speak at length upon it, as I shall have another opportunity. I should like to take paragraph 16 and [*Hon. W. Kingsmill:* Throw it outside.] I should like to take it with paragraph 18. Paragraph 16, I think, deserves the fate that it met with before at the hands of this Chamber. But let us consider with it paragraph 18, containing a suggestion for an amendment of the Constitution. That expression is fairly broad, and we can only assume that it refers to a reduction of the qualification for the Upper House franchise. A member says the qualification may be doubled. Possibly; but the inference is that it will be reduced. This seems to me the irony of fate, after the arguments we heard years ago during the Federal campaign, when all or the majority of those who had a stake in the country, particularly in the form of land, were afraid of Federation. The people who had come here from over sea, who really did not know our climate—when it rained and when the sun shone—said they had an equal stake in the country, and they were quite sure we were all mistaken; and that even if things did go wrong, those settled on the land could make up any deficiency. They maintained that they had an equal stake in the country with the older settlers, whereas the men on the land and others who had property here were afraid of Federation, because they saw it would mean direct taxation by which they would have to provide the revenue lost to the country; and that if things became bad all round, the other fellows would leave our shores while we should have to stick to our land. We also complained that we would not get that consideration from the Federal Parliament, owing to our isolation, which we would get from our own Parliament by remaining out of the Federation, and we complained that Federation would be governed by two Houses elected on the same franchise, so that a man with property would be practically kicked-out, though he was the only man who would have to make up the loss of revenue. We complained

that the man of property would not get any consideration from the Federal Parliament, so that it was better to stay out of Federation. Now, it seems to me, we have come face to face with that position. The Government tell us that we have already arrived at that stage in spite of the arguments of those men with no stake in the country who, when we urged them not to force us into Federation, claimed that we need have no fear because everything would be all right. Where to-day are their assurances? Just as we all feared in those days, they now come along and say:—"Owing to Federation we have lost so much of our revenue that the only way it can be made up is for you fellows who own the land to do so, and we who have no land can take the next boat and go out. We know you fellows will not be able to sell your land, you cannot get away, therefore you are fairly safe game." We also see that they clamour at the same time for the Upper Chamber of our country, the only safeguard left to look after State rights, the only block we have at present between us and the Federal House, to have so much of the franchise taken away so that these people will also have much greater power over it. The two propositions seem to be absolutely unreasonable, and if we have to put up with the land tax, I sincerely hope we will not also have to give away any portion of the franchise still existing. In fact I cannot understand the position; it is in keeping with what I said in regard to a lot of men who are introduced here at the present time with no capital. Taking away the franchise is taking away a leverage which I think is necessary amongst our people. The mere fact of the existence of the franchise seems to me to be an inducement to thrift. I cannot get away from the idea that in this country of high values it is easy enough for a man to qualify for the present franchise. Let it be a spur to qualify; let these people show their confidence in the country by exercising thrift to acquire property, which means a certain amount of interest in the country—and it would prove at least that they have a *bona fide* belief in the country—and so get the right to the franchise. When I first came into the House I think I advocated the extension of the Goldfields

Water Supply Scheme. It is to be extended to the agricultural towns of York and Beverley I am pleased to see, but I am sorry that the Government have not seen at the same time that for the same amount of money practically they could have brought the water to the city, in fact right to Fremantle. I think it is necessary that the port of Fremantle should be attached to the Mundaring scheme. Even if there were no other demand, the probability is that the vessels at the port would justify the extension of the scheme to Fremantle. There are also various places along the route that could be served. I feel quite sure that if the scheme were placed in the hands of people with a certain amount of commercial enterprise, they would turn it into a much more payable concern. I am sure that they would not allow a market at their very doors to lie so long without giving it attention, without placing the water at the doors of the people who are so anxious to secure it during the summer months. Probably by that means we could raise some of the revenue the Government are asking the country to contribute by way of a land tax. I have very much pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan): I also have pleasure in supporting the motion so ably moved by Mr. Pennefather and in noting the cheery tone of the Governor's Speech throughout. It is pleasing to know, not only from the member who moved the motion, but also from the Government through the able Minister for Mines and the Government officers, that the mineral resources of the North are of such great value. I have always believed that the North, when prospected and developed as it is now about to be, would lead to the development of almost untold wealth; and I know that a great number of the residents of this State are also of that opinion. The values of the baser metals will no doubt contribute to a great extent to the belief expressed by the Government, and as long as they maintain anything like the values they now have, the future of the North is assured. To make the baser metals of value it is absolutely necessary that facilities should be pro-

vided in the way of railways. I do not know whether Port Hedland is the best starting point for the line, but no doubt the Government are well advised on the point, and we must take it on trust. I am glad that a start is being made with the railway. Not only in the North, but everywhere else where there is a reasonable prospect of undertakings paying, I would gladly support any Government in spending money in that direction, because it is undoubtedly to the mining industry that we owe the present prosperity of the country. It is retarded at present, but ups and downs come in every country; we have seen it in Victoria and every other State; and I feel with every confidence that the depression is only temporary. With regard to the dairying industry I am pleased the Government are taking it seriously in hand, and doing what they can to support and encourage settlers to keep some of our money amongst us. I find that this State sends away every year £400,000 for dairy produce. I would ask members to consider these figures. If we could keep that money circulated in this State what an enormous benefit it would be. There is not the slightest doubt there are portions of this State eminently adapted for dairying, and it has been a surprise to me that the settlers have not gone in seriously for dairying. I know in portions of Victoria where I lived when I was younger, dairying was successfully carried on in districts where the temperature was even considerably greater than it is in the Eastern Districts of this State, and where the land was inferior to much of the vast areas we have here which could be more successfully developed for that industry. I am sorry the Government have sent to a country like New Zealand for an expert; it is possible that there are men here well qualified to teach the people, and they would have added to that the local knowledge a man should have. No doubt the present expert will take some time to acquire that local knowledge which is necessary. The importation of dairy cattle of good strains, and assisting the settler to buy them on long terms, are steps in the right direction from which I think great good will result. The proposal to re-introduce a

tax on unimproved values is one I regret to see referred to in this Speech. As members know, last session I was one of the strongest opponents of this tax, and I feel it would be a very bad advertisement for this State if the tax passed this Chamber. Notwithstanding that we have an accumulated deficit of £200,000 I would like to see it carried on for a little while longer. It is not absolutely necessary that it should be stopped immediately. Men are able to carry on business successfully for a time by carrying overdrafts; and we are simply carrying an overdraft. It is not that our credit is bad; our assets are good; there is a temporary depression probably owing to extravagance in the past, but so long as we go on passing taxation measures and providing the money, any Government will spend it. Last session we compelled the Government to stay their hands, and the result has been that they have had to move round and see where they could make economies. If we keep them dancing on tauterhooks a little longer I think they will make up the deficiency. The Railway Department has been brought very prominently before us, at least the great cost of running the concern has; and those able articles written by Mr. Chinn referred to by Mr. Moss have set people thinking. The more we examine the thing the more we must realise that very great economies can be effected in that department. With the great revenue they have, their profits are very small. I have been told that economies might also be effected in the Midland Workshops, that practically there are three men doing one man's work, in many instances. I do not know whether this is true in regard to these particular works, but I mention it because it is an establishment of considerable magnitude. Naturally the men engaged will find work to keep themselves employed, so long as the Department responsible for keeping them allow them to be kept on. If retrenchment were commenced, I feel certain that considerable savings could be effected, not only in those works but throughout the railways. If we had a fearless and competent Commissioner, he would soon make up the leeway; and not only would he be able to make up the eighty odd thousand pounds we are behind this

year, but it would not surprise me if he found it possible to save £150,000 or even £200,000. This would render unnecessary any land tax, which should be the last tax to be imposed. The Government would be wise to carefully study the position, and see whether retrenchment which can be effected not only in the railways, but particularly in that department, is not such as will enable us to make up our leeway. The Queensland railways have been referred to in this connection; and although I have never been in Queensland, the comparison seems to me to be a fair one. Our climate and that of Queensland are similar to a great extent, and the distances served are somewhat the same as ours. When we consider therefore what has been done there, and the difference in cost, not only in one branch of the railways, but in every branch—and Mr. Chinn has shown that we are behind Queensland in every instance—the figures with which we are dealing are so large that I believe a saving to the amounts I have quoted could be effected. The question of the appointment of one or three commissioners is one which demands careful consideration. In my opinion one commissioner would be sufficient. A competent commissioner might be obtained in one of the other States, and if so he would not take so long to acquire that local knowledge which is necessary as would be required by a man imported from America or the United Kingdom. It might be better to have three commissioners, but I take the position to be something like that which obtains on our big mines. There they have a general manager, who has able assistants in the underground manager, looking after that department of the mine, the battery manager, and the manager of works above ground; and if those men do not suit, it is possible to replace them by others. Whereas if you have three commissioners, and two of them are incompetent or will not work with the chief commissioner, we would have a repetition of what occurred recently in one of the other States. I therefore think we would be running a risk in having three commissioners. The present acting commissioner, Mr. Short, has probably never had the chance which his friends would

like to see him get of proving his worth; but he would be in a position to afford valuable assistance to the new commissioner. If retrenchment can be carried out, I think we ought to offer a bonus in the shape of increased salary to the heads of the service to induce them to carefully consider that matter. We might have to increase the salary from £800 to £1,000 or even to £1,200; but if large economies can be effected that would be only fair. It is what we would do in our own businesses. I agree with the remarks made by Mr. Moss on the question of the carriage of goods at commissioner's risk. It is astounding to think that when you employ a common carrier—and that is what the railways are—you have to pay him a premium on the ordinary freight to get those goods delivered safely. Such a thing would not be tolerated elsewhere. If you employ a carrier and he fails to deliver your goods, you may sue him and recover; and we should treat the railways in the same way. On the goldfields some years ago there was an agitation for the establishment of a bonded store in connection with the railways on the goldfields. Traders were at the inconvenience of having to pay away large sums of money to clear goods, such as wines, spirits, and tobacco, in bond at Fremantle which might not be required for some time, and it was thought that by the establishment of a bond, the traders would be able to keep this money in their pockets until it was actually required, and have their goods stored in bond at Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, or elsewhere. I made one of a deputation which waited upon the then Minister for Railways on this question, and after listening to what we had to say the Minister replied that he could not support the idea at all. When pressed for a reason, the Minister astounded us by saying that the loss on wines and spirits would be so great that he as a Minister for Railways could not entertain the idea. There is a commentary on the management of the railways—loss may fall on the private trader, but the Government dare not make a loss. With regard to retrenchment in the Public Works Department, I notice we still have an Architectural Branch. I do not know how many officers are employed in it, but seeing the small

amount of money now being spent in public buildings, it appears to me that this department might be done away with, and what work there is to be done could be left to private individuals who are competent and willing to carry it out. The present Government have pointed out the necessity for economy, and if they are assured that this House will not pass a land tax, they will be forced to recognise the necessity for retrenchment; and where there's a will there's a way. I am opposed to the Constitution Act Amendment Bill as proposed. Last year I was before the electors of the largest and most important province of the State; and when I was asked one question as to a reduction of the franchise for this Chamber, I replied that I was opposed to it. I made that the plank of my programme. My opponent took the other side of the question; and seeing that I was returned, that may be taken as an indication that so far as the largest and most important province in the State is concerned there is no desire on the part of the people for a reduction, and no necessity in the interests of the State. We have seen the result of the mistake made in the Federal Constitution under which the same electors return representatives to both houses. The result is that we might as well have only one Chamber. What is wanted, however, is industrial peace and more capital; but we will not get more capital until those people who are responsible for industrial disputes realise the importance of encouraging people to bring capital into the country. No sooner does a body of men or an individual build up a business by the introduction of machinery and capital, than they become fair game for those who engineer industrial disputes. The recent coal-lumpers' strike in Sydney shows how a small body of men, because they cannot get exactly what they want, can tie up the shipping, the mines, and the whole industry of a State. Those people take no notice of an Arbitration Court award which fixes a certain rate of wages, if the award does not suit them. If the award suits them they obey it; if not, they evade it. I would like to see arbitration and conciliation wiped out. We might as well go back to the old way of settling disputes. I hope the good things men-

tioned in the Speech will come about. I am sure we have turned the corner, and that, given no land tax and industrial peace and more capital to open up the country, there are good times ahead.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan Suburban): I shall not make more than a few casual observations on the Speech of His Excellency; and in doing so I am not going to express surprise, as some members have done, at the optimistic nature of that Speech. Members must know that it is in the nature of Governments to be optimistic, and any Government that does not possess a spirit of optimism fails in that which should be inherent, and without which the Government can be of no avail. On the other hand, I desire to say in regard to the extremely eloquent speech delivered by Mr. Moss, that his tone was in almost the other extreme. I think he was too pessimistic, and that the condition of affairs which he pictured in this State may be looked upon as being to a great extent temporary. We know that misfortunes come not alone but in battalions, and this applies not only to this State but in a particular manner to the hon. member's constituency. Fremantle was still feeling the effect of the removal of the workshops when another blow occurred, and if anything a greater one, in the cessation of public works there. Then apart from Government works and apart from political institutions, we know that, as has been done practically throughout the world, a good many of the wholesale firms who used to make Fremantle their headquarters have found it necessary to shift their businesses to Perth. So to a certain extent the misfortunes of Fremantle which the hon. member speaks of are confined to Fremantle. But apparently, from one promise held out in the Speech, that good angel which always has the destinies of Fremantle in hand is still engaged in that congenial duty. The expenditure of this £400,000 on a dock must brighten up things in the town so ably represented by my hon. friend. In regard to the temporary nature of our misfortunes, the hon. member spoke of the most disastrous timber strike—I call it a strike, though I believe other gentlemen have

another name for it, or did have—which has just ended, I am glad to say. Mr. Moss quoted figures to show that no less a sum than £150,000 was kept from circulation during that strike; and in a comparatively small community such as ours still is, the sudden cessation in expenditure of such an amount must necessarily be severely felt. Statements have been made that certain action taken by persons in authority have had a prejudicial effect on business propositions on the goldfields. I hope that is not so. I hope the large amount of liquid capital that went into circulation by nefarious means in the great goldfields towns has been over-estimated, and that the gibe that has been thrown at those towns living on illicit gains has been altogether incorrect. It has been stated that a great deal of trouble has been occasioned throughout the various portions of the State during the recess by depression. I think the resources of the State to-day are as strong if not stronger than they ever were. These resources show more signs of being made capable of development than they ever have been, and I am inclined to side with and share that optimism of which the Speech is so full. [*Hon. M. L. Moss* : You are not in trade in the country.] I am not talking of trade, but of the natural resources of the country; and after all trade is an artificial qualification. I am talking of the natural resources of the country and their immediate development. These are extremely favourable at the present time, and for that reason I am inclined to take the view which my friend thinks is too optimistic. I agree with the remarks which the hon. member made as to Federation. I say like that hon. gentleman, I myself, metaphorically speaking, for the last two or three years have gone in sackcloth and ashes. I supported the ideal which has turned out to be so sad a reality for this State; but I feel that the federal idea is not to blame, that it is simply the attitude which has been assumed by our neighbours towards this State, and I think that attitude is going to be more or less temporary. One of the factors of our depression, and the aggressive action taken towards this State by her sister States—shall I say her step-sister States?—is due to the fact that those States, like the prophet

of old, waxed fat on its neighbour's kine. Our affairs are not quite so prosperous now, but when the reverse is the case, when this State is going ahead by leaps and bounds and the other States find that they are not so prosperous, then they will take more notice of Western Australia and will not vilify her as they do now. I think the trend of prosperity of the Eastern and Western halves of Australia has a great deal to do with the point of view of those gentlemen who form the Federal Parliament. I suppose the most momentous question we shall be called upon to deal with this session is the management of the railways; and I may at once admit, looking back for the past four or five years, that I am inclined to be disappointed with the progress made in the railways, more especially with the reduction in the working expenses which is so conspicuous by its absence. I do not wish members to suppose by these remarks that I am in favour of any change in the method of control. I would look on the reversion to political control of the railways as a decidedly retrograde step. I speak in this connection with perhaps some little authority, having been the immediate predecessor of the present Minister for some six months or so. Given the field that gentleman had to work upon, I look upon the result as disappointing. For instance we find to-day, instead of the percentage of working costs to revenue having decreased, the reverse has been the case, there has been some slight increase. But members will remember years ago when the late Commissioner took office, everything was of the most unfavourable nature towards the cheap running of the railways. Up to May, 1902, for some two or three months previously, the railways were tackling a proposition the like of which had never been taken in Australia before. They were running a 300-mile dry stage from Chidlow's Well to Coolgardie, and they had to spend £300 in a condenser at Coolgardie in order to cope with the water difficulty for a few weeks only. And the dryness of the railways at that time necessitated the running of seven water trains per day, the putting in of crossing places along the line, and other conveniences which added considerably to the cost of running the line. I do not think any great in-

novation has been made with regard to the cheaper and better carriage of freights or passengers. It may be news to members to know that the order for the goldfields express service of which all Western Australians and most gentlemen who travel over the line, except perhaps that Hon. Senator from New South Wales, Lieut.-Colonel J. C. Neild, are rightly proud—that order was sent away before Mr. George took control. I had the pleasure officially of sending away for the cars. Altogether, I think the results of the railways have been disappointing. There is also a bright side of the question. I think Western Australia in the present day, with its high cost of railway running, with its high cost of running on percentage to revenue, offers such a magnificent field for any railway expert who wishes to make a name, that if the Government are willing to pay a good salary—and a good railway commissioner is almost beyond price—if that is the case I think the Government will find plenty of men willing, not only for the sake of the salary, but for the sake of the career, to take the job in hand. I agree with Mr. Sommers in the remarks made as to the number of commissioners. I certainly think the ideal number of commissioners is number one. As long as you can get an autocrat of the right kind, that autocracy is best for the railways. The other offices, that of the mechanical man referred to and the traffic expert, can be easily filled by officers now in the State. In this connection let me say that too much stress can be laid on the necessity of a commissioner from abroad learning our local conditions. There is always a danger of a man taking up with local conditions and local methods which have produced the present state of the railways, and which we cry aloud to be removed. Anybody who comes here determined to tackle the matter in a whole-hearted manner—and it must of course be a disagreeable task—the Government must stand firmly behind, because of the disagreeable duties he may have to perform. I think most magnificent work can be done towards the reconstruction of our railways for the better. Again, if we take in review the experiences of our neighbouring States, we find what a revolution has been caused in the con-

duct of the Victorian railways by the gentleman now occupying the office of commissioner there. He has had a great many hard things said about him, but that is only what is to be expected. Anybody who takes in hand the straightening up of a great body of men such as are in the railway service or in the civil service is sure to be one of the most unpopular men in the community; but that I presume is considered in the salary. The system of one commissioner in Victoria has been a conspicuous success. In New South Wales the system of three commissioners has led to an extreme amount of friction. Some little time ago those commissioners used to fairly bristle when they met one another in the street, and it was impossible for them to confer together while they had their little petty quarrels and jealousies. But the railway system in New South Wales was brought to a high state of efficiency by one commissioner, Mr. Eddy. [*Hon. J. A. Thomson*: He had two assistants.] I think anybody who realised the work Mr. Eddy did and the methods he employed will say that while Mr. Eddy was in office in New South Wales there was only one commissioner. I wish for a moment to touch upon an extremely delicate question which is contained in paragraph 16 of the Governor's Speech, which reads:—

“A measure for the imposition of a tax on the unimproved value of land, which my advisers consider necessary to secure a proper adjustment of the finances of the State, will be again submitted for your sanction.”

Before dealing with this paragraph, let me say that I think a great deal of nonsense has been talked during the past week or two about the effect on the finances caused by the rejection of that Bill last session by this Chamber. It has been represented that out of a deficiency which was then estimated at £110,000, but which has turned out since to be a little less, £60,000 was due to the rejection by this Chamber of that measure. That is transparently wrong, because if the Government, I will not say displayed unusual energy, but abnormal energy for any Government, they could only have collected a half-year's tax,

which on their own estimate would have amounted to £30,000, and I doubt very much whether they would have got that. So that in the first place is an overstatement, an exaggeration, which leads the people of Western Australia who do not think—I am not talking of the whole of the people, but those people who do not think—to believe that they have been somewhat hardly used in that connection by this Chamber. In connection with any taxation, we have to consider two propositions. Firstly, is the taxation necessary? Secondly, what form should the taxation take? With regard to the necessity for this taxation, I maintain from revelations which have come about lately that the argument that it is unnecessary is stronger now than it has been at any previous time. For instance, I may quote from the speech made by the Premier himself a few days ago, wherein he compared the railway systems of Queensland and this State, and wherein he said that the train mile rate of Queensland was 3s. 0½d. per train mile, while the train mile rate of this State was 5s. 6d.; and as members know, after all the efficiency with regard to the cheap running of a railway has as its measure the train mile rate, which is obtained by dividing the total cost of running the railways by the number of train miles actually run. The member who leads the Government went on to say that while we perhaps could not hope to come down to that 3s. rate which has obtained in Queensland for the past two years, still he was absolutely certain it would be possible for this to be done under judicious management, to arrive at a rate at least half way between the two. That is to say, instead of cutting off 40 per cent. from the cost of running our railways, he estimated that we could possibly cut off at least 20 per cent., thus reducing the cost by one-fifth. Hon. members will see that this is a big proposition. The cost of running the railways in this State is approximately £1,250,000 per annum, and 20 per cent. of that is £250,000 per annum; so if the hon. gentleman who leads the Government believes that in one year with good management he can save that quarter of a million, where is the necessity for bringing down a land tax which he estimates to bring in £60,000?

The Colonial Secretary: You cannot do that in a day, you know. Time must be allowed.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: But if in one year the Government can save £250,000, the Minister who leads this House will be generous enough to admit that they might easily save £60,000. That is a reasonable proposition, and the argument very effectually deals with anything the Premier has said with regard to the necessity for bringing in a land tax at the present time. Apart from that, I would ask what have the Government done during the past year towards making those necessary reforms which were indicated when the Taxation Bill was under discussion last session? What, for instance, have they done in reference to the Coolgardie Water Scheme? Are they still continuing to supply water on the Eastern Goldfields at less than cost price? Or have they endeavoured to make that scheme in some degree pay the whole or any part of that £80,000 deficiency which was apparent in its accounts last year? Has any effort been made in this direction? The Governor's Speech does not show; but perhaps the Leader of this House, who is a goldfields member, may be able to give us some information as to what has been or is being done in that matter. Again, another way to save money was indicated last year in regard to the cutting down of municipal subsidies, which subsidies, as pointed out on one or two occasions, have been obtained in certain cases in an illegal manner. Has any endeavour been made by the Government to recover the money so improperly obtained by certain of the larger municipalities? Also is it the intention of the Government during the coming year to decrease the amount of the subsidy? Until those three questions are answered, I think the House would be acting detrimentally to the country and foolishly also in again considering the question of imposing a tax on the unimproved value of land. I am now and have been for years, indeed I have frequently said that I am in favour of the taxation of unimproved land; and the fact is that when the subject was first mooted there appeared to be a good deal of inability on the part of some members to distinguish between a tax

on unimproved land and a tax on unimproved land values. This confusion may have led some members to impute to me that at one time I advocated a tax on the unimproved value of land. I say I have been in favour of a tax which will ensure that the man holding land shall make reasonable and proper use of whatever land he holds. The second question with regard to the taxation proposition is, what form shall that taxation proposition take? If it be said there is a necessity for more taxation at the present time, I claim that I have proved out of the mouth of the Leader of the Government that there is not. I say the form of that taxation should be an income tax and not a land tax; because first you have to take steps to ascertain that a man has money to pay with before you impose the tax on him. Farther, the man who is to be taxed on his land may be paying a tax on an unprofitable proposition; but if he has to pay an income tax, that form of taxation must include a land tax, because an income tax must be levied on all sources of profit from which a man derives his income; therefore I say an income tax is more fair as a basis and more equitable in its incidence than a land tax can be, because in imposing an income tax you have to make sure that the man has the means with which to pay the tax before you can impose it on him. I assure the Colonial Secretary that in offering this argument against a land tax, there are any amount of farther arguments if those I have given are not sufficient against that which I may call, in the language of Mr. McLarty, this most iniquitous proposal. I am pleased indeed to be able to make some remarks in distinct praise of the action contemplated by the Government in some respects, as set forth in His Excellency's Speech. With regard to the proposed amendment of the Arbitration Act, undoubtedly it has been forcibly brought home to us that in this State where the trade unions registered under the Act appear to be bodies of straw, the effect of the Act in its working is very one-sided. In England, on the contrary, the case is different as was shown some years ago when damages to the extent of, I think, £10,000 were given against a trade union, and the amount was paid by that union. Hon.

members well know that if damages to the extent of only £1,000 were given against a trade union in this State, the result would be,—indeed I do not exactly know what might happen.

The Colonial Secretary: Have they not altered that in England since?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Yes; possibly they have. One of the most pleasing paragraphs in His Excellency's Speech is No. 20, referring to the introduction of a Bill for the protection of infant life; and here I differ from Mr. Moss, who thinks the present legislation, if properly administered, is sufficient. I am certain that so long as we delegate to local authorities a power which should be exercised by a central body, we shall get unsatisfactory service. The Colonial Secretary will know, even from his short experience of administration of the Health Act, that local boards of health are extremely rotten reeds to depend on when they are required to carry out the provisions of the Health Act; and this has been amply proved even under the most favourable circumstances, even where the local board is composed of persons who are of high standing in the community—the affairs of that local board somehow get into a most awful muddle, and the services they are supposed to render are carried out most disgracefully. That has been so in the past, and will be so in the future under the present system. In South Australia they have had—due mainly to the efforts of one of the most talented ladies in Australia, Miss Spence—the most perfect system of infant life protection that is to be found in the world; and the Government there found that by calling to their aid those persons (a surprising number in the community) who are willing to adopt children, and by enlisting the services of those who are willing, for no fee or reward, but out of good nature, to do the work, the Government have found there is a large decrease in the mortality of infants placed under the direction of that society, as compared with the mortality in other cases. I hope that when the promised Bill is brought in here, it will be found that if it goes not so far as in South Australia, at all events it will go in the same direction. Another pleasing note is that I have to congratulate the Government on their in-

tention to bring down a Bill for the construction of the Port Hedland to Marble Bar Railway. I say this the more readily because I was the first member of Parliament who had a motion passed in regard to that proposed railway, and I feel sure that to a great extent the bright things which have been prophesied about it will be realised. All the works indicated in paragraph 23 of the Speech have my most cordial approval; but as to others, I am not so enthusiastic. Having taken an active part in the initiation of the building of a Hospital for the Insane at Claremont, and it having fallen to me officially to choose the site, having also had severe battles with successive Treasurers to get the necessary funds allotted in the Estimates, it is pleasing indeed to think that this great and important work will be brought to a conclusion as soon as possible. It is gratifying to feel also that when this hospital is finished, it will be the best and most up-to-date hospital of the kind in Australia; and I feel justified in saying that we will have as its managing head the best-qualified man in Australia. I am not quite so enthusiastic about the extension of water supply from the Mundaring reservoir to serve the towns of York and Beverley; I am not so enthusiastic as Mr. Hamersley appears to be, for surely it should be possible for those municipalities to have furnished themselves with a water supply. A water supply should be a payable proposition; and surely the local sources of supply, by conservation or other means, are sufficient in agricultural districts to provide townships with an efficient supply of good water for drinking or other purposes. Again, I have heard people speaking quite disrespectfully of the Kalgoorlie abattoirs. I can assure the Colonial Secretary that I have heard persons who do not come from that part of the State express the strongest opinions in disfavour of the erection of those abattoirs.

At 6.15, the President left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (continuing) : I have but a few more remarks to make, and these deal principally with what may

easily be formed into a very large subject certain omissions from the Speech of His Excellency. And by these omissions I mean little discrepancies between the Speech of His Excellency and the policy speech which the Leader of the Government delivered a little time ago at Bunbury. The omissions on which I shall principally touch are two. The first is the stock-tax proposition announced at Bunbury by the Premier. It has been a matter of considerable surprise that this stock-tax proposal makes no appearance in the Governor's Speech. Perhaps the Leader of the House will explain, when he replies, why this should be so. And it is a farther matter of surprise, and indeed, although it may seem strange to hear me say so, a matter of regret; because the stock-tax was calculated to remedy a very inequitable state of affairs which now obtains in certain parts of the country. The other day I was conversing, at some distance from Perth, with a pastoralist who owns country in the Murchison district, and round and through that country of his runs the rabbit-proof fence. He complained, and I think with a good deal of reason, that although his country was fenced to his liking, still, the fence was put round and through it, and in one instance within twelve feet of one of his fences, which he was instructed to pull down; and he is supposed to pay 25s. per mile per annum for maintenance. As he says, while he is very glad of the protection which the Government fence affords, still, that protection is granted to everybody else inside the fence, and he objects strongly to paying this 25s. per mile per annum whilst so many others go free. This seems to me an extremely inequitable state of affairs, and the gentleman in question was naturally incensed about it. The stock tax was mooted with the idea of allowing the pastoralists, who, after all, do not contribute very much to the revenue, to pay direct taxation as some compensation for the protection afforded them by the rabbit-proof fence and other facilities created for their special benefit. Then, I say, it will be an extremely equitable tax. And furthermore, it is a tax which they

are agreeable to pay. If I remember rightly, some two or three years ago a deputation of pastoralists waited on the then Premier, or the Minister for Lands, with a view to having certain facilities granted, and expressed themselves willing to contribute to the revenue a special tax for this special purpose. Considering that, and also the case I have already quoted—I think the Minister for Agriculture will be able to tell the Leader of the House about that—I think it would be a good plan to allow the pastoral section of the community to help itself in the manner indicated. Another matter mentioned in the policy speech of the Premier, and I am glad to say omitted from the Governor's Speech, is the reduction of the sinking fund. It is more as a matter of political curiosity than for any other reason that I mention this. I cannot imagine how that found its way into the policy speech. It was, I think, the most ridiculous proposal that has ever been made in a policy speech, and as the policy was in all probability cabled to England as the announced policy of the Government for the coming year, I can only hope that the most emphatic contradiction followed as soon as possible regarding that particular item. Nothing could tend more to discredit this country in the eyes of the investing British public than that statement made at Bunbury. I am pleased indeed to be able on the whole to support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. In my opinion there is only one serious blot on the fair face of that document. That, I rejoice to say, is a blot which, after all, is not indelible, and I hope that the means of erasing it will not be found wanting when the consideration of the said blot comes before this Chamber. I beg to support the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) : It is not my intention to delay the House. My remarks will be very brief indeed. I am of course pleased at the good reception given by members to the Governor's Speech, and that being so, no very ser-

ious charges or criticisms having been levelled at the Government for the administration of the country's affairs during the last twelve months, I do not feel called upon, nor do I think members expect from me, any lengthy remarks. It would of course be a sheer waste of time to repeat what has been said in the Governor's Speech, in the Premier's policy speech, or in any other public utterances by the Premier or his Ministers. There are just one or two matters on which I would briefly touch ; because there seems to have been some little misunderstanding as to the actions of the Government, and as to matters mentioned in the policy speech. One member adversely criticised the increase of wharfage rates. He complained that they had been unduly increased, and increased on agricultural produce and agricultural implements. He quoted an instance where a farmer paid on his waggon £3 10s. wharfage at Albany, while 18s. was paid in South Australia from whence it came. Now I have a quite different method of looking at that transaction, for there is a vast difference, as members know, between inward wharfage and outward wharfage. I am of course primarily responsible for the alteration of most of the wharfage rates. The Government made to the Harbour Trust recommendations which were adopted, and it was on the Government's recommendation the rates were made uniform. Therefore I, as Colonial Secretary, was primarily responsible for the charge made on the machine mentioned by the hon. member, though it was landed on a railway wharf. In revising those rules the Government tried as far as they could, without infringing the letter of the Commonwealth Constitution, to afford some little protection to our own people. We did away with all outward wharfage on products of the State. Had that waggon been sent out from this State it would have paid, not 18s., but nothing at all. We should have helped our own people to send it out. Therefore, so far from the instance forming a charge against the Government, it is to their credit that we have no outward wharf-

age ; whereas in South Australia the article mentioied was charged 18s. We also raised to the highest possible point the inward wharfage on all products, farm products particularly, which can be grown in this State. By doing away with outward wharfage and raising inward wharfage, we give great assistance to our own producers. Having in view the asistance of our own people, we provided that when goods have once paid the full inward wharfage at any port in the State, they will not be charged with inward wharfage when transhipped to any other wharf. Had we not made this alteration, our own people would have been in a most unfair position. As an instance to illustrate my meaning : if goods sent from Melbourne to Fremantle paid a certain wharfage, say 5s. inward when landed there, those goods if transhipped from Fremantle or Perth, as they often are, to such places as Hopetoun, Geraldton, or the Nor'-West ports, would have been again required to pay an inward wharfage of another 5s., whereas, had they been shipped from Melbourne in the first instance direct to any of the outlying ports I have mentioned, they would have paid only the one wharfage of 5s., though our own shippers would have had to pay twice that sum ; therefore our own people would have been at a disadvantage. So as far as possible to have the trade of this State for our own people, we made that alteration in the regulations. When the Fremantle Harbour Trust altered the wharfage rates at the request of the Government, they were very careful only to alter the wharfage rates, not to increase the harbour or the light dues ; and thus they obviated any unnecessary charges on ships calling there with small cargoes. It is only when cargo is landed that we charge wharfage ; so the charge does not deter any but ships with very big consignments from coming to our ports. For years past, though I maintained they were quite able to do so, the Fremantle Harbour Trust have not raised sufficient money to pay interest and sinking fund. Seeing that their rates were considerably below

those of the more important ports of the Eastern States, it seemed fair that the trust should be asked to pay these charges. They did pay interest before, but not sinking fund. They are now called on to pay both, and, as Mr. Moss remarked, a sufficient amount in addition to pay interest on the dock when it is built ; so we need have no fear that the dock will be a charge or a drag on the public. Interest and sinking fund in respect of it will be paid by the shippers who use it ; that is of course, assuming there is no direct profit from the dock. If there is any, so much the better ; the burden will be lighter. Some remarks were made regarding immigration, and I would ask members and the public generally who read complaints in the newspapers, not to accept such *ex parte* statements. The papers are unfortunately too prone to publish complaints without hearing both sides of the question, and it stands to reason that if immigrants come here in large numbers, or indeed if they come in moderate numbers, there must be a percentage who will be dissatisfied. There is always in this world a percentage of men who can never do well in any country. When they come here there is bound to be a little disappointment because, after all, it is very hard for a man living in a settled country like England, or any European country, to grasp a new place like this and meet the privations he may be called upon to put up with. It is not that there is any misrepresentation. I can assure members that we do not paint the picture as bright as it is. The Agent General has repeatedly said that he is twitted by Canadian agents, and even by agents of some of the other Australian States, because he does not put the best side forward. As a matter of fact, he shows the people the hardships that have to be encountered as well as the wealth and good living they are going to get when they come here. When they arrive they are taken in hand—I was going to say they are found employment, but we do not encourage men looking for employment unless it is a class of labour for which we know there is a good demand. Mr. Thomson has said that it is

not right to bring farm labourers here because the wages are not more than they are in Scotland. That may be the case; wages may be as good and the comfort better in Scotland than in Australia; but the hon. member must know that the opportunity a man gets to acquire a farm and a fortune for himself in Australia he certainly would not, if he lived to any age, get in Scotland. A man comes here, gets employment, and under our liberal land laws, especially with the assistance from the Agricultural Bank under the amendment passed last session, he may acquire a farm himself, which in a few years may become a comfortable little farm. Mr. Patrick was correct when he said that it was not altogether the capital a man brings here that was needed, and that one man with £1,000 is practically no better than another with nothing. It all depends upon the class of immigrant selected. I can assure members that the greatest care is exercised in the choice of these immigrants. There is the nominated system, whereby persons in this State nominate a friend for a passage. In due course half the passage of the person at home is paid for him. If it is £12 the Government pay £6. The person nominating has to be a well-known resident of the State, and we must know that the person nominated is of good moral character and is a healthy person. The Agent General must have a certificate from a clergyman as to the man's moral character and must be satisfied that the man is a healthy person. After all, it is not surprising that there are a few who come and decry the country, but I can give hundreds of instances of people coming here with no previous experience who have settled down and done really well on farms; in fact so well in some cases that they have sent over for numbers of their friends within the first year. It is peculiar in this State, perhaps in Australia generally, that you hear about the disappointed immigrant; but there are thousands of disappointed emigrants going to America and Canada about whom not a word is ever heard. I went across to America three years ago and on the ship in which I travelled

there were 1,500 immigrants, but there were almost as many coming back decrying the country. One heard nothing about that. To compare how they treat these people in America with how they treat them here, these 1,500 persons were put on an island near New York and later on were taken through a sort of race, examined, and turned back if there was anything wrong with any of them. Those passed through were put on trains and sent out West. I asked the agent "Where are they going?" He said "Going out West." I asked "What do you do with them; do you find them employment?" He said "I guess we do not allow them to stay about New York" —probably they would join the unemployed. I asked again, "Are you going to give them employment?" and he replied "It is a case of root hog or die when they get out there." That is a contrast to the way in which immigrants are treated in Australia, particularly in Western Australia.

Hon. J. A. Thomson : They are not assisting immigrants to America.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Of course the distance is very much shorter. Immigrants can get across to America for a couple of pounds. There is great competition amongst the steamers.

Hon. V. Hamersley : The Americans do not have an agent telling the immigrants that they will get the finest treatment in the world.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : The Canadians have agents, but they do not say anything about the winter of Canada and the other bad points. Our Agent General and his officers tell the people of the bad points. Mention was made of Mr. Lane, who arrived here the other day with a batch of immigrants. An hon. member said that he felt sure that these immigrants did not have £50 amongst the lot of them. I know that is not right. Mr. Lane is not an agent of the Government at all. He is a gentleman known to Northam people. He lived at Northam for a number of years. I have seen him; he is a very good stamp of man. He went home and rented a farm in his native district, but the climate did not suit him and he decided to come

back to Western Australia where he had got on so well; and in doing so, he gave a couple of lectures for the Agent General (I do not know whether he got anything for it) and he brought out about 30 people. Now he is good enough to devote his time to showing them round the country and where to get land. I am afraid some misconception seems to have arisen in regard to the Premier's speech on the point of the sinking fund. Mr. Moss and Mr. Kingsmill have dwelt on that subject. I think if the speech is turned up the Premier will not be found to say that he intended a policy of repudiation, that he intended to sweep away the sinking fund, and thereby do away with one of the most important conditions under which the loans were granted. To begin with, would it be possible or lawful? The Premier certainly did not contemplate anything like it. He said that the sinking fund of one per cent. was very heavy and it should be considered in future loans whether one-half per cent. sinking fund would not meet the case. There is a good deal to be said on the subject. It is certainly nice to find a good sinking fund, but after all a-half per cent. sinking fund might be better, as it would wipe off the loan in 67 years, while the one per cent. takes 46. The other would not be such a heavy burden on the present generation. The Premier pointed out why one per cent. was not required, that the big proportion of our loans is in our railways and that these railways are as good an asset to-day as the day they were built, if not better; they are constantly being relaid and kept in very good order, and that therefore sinking fund was provided for them in that way. Notwithstanding that we provide one per cent. sinking fund and it runs to a good round sum, something like a quarter million pounds per annum, there is no talk of doing away with it. It would be a very bad advertisement for any Government or for any country. Mr. Moss also pointed out, and trusted the Government would be alive to the fact of allowing the Commonwealth to take over the State debts, not the debts we have now incurred but the taking over of

the control of any future loans. If members will turn to the policy speech they will see there also that the Premier is quite alive to the question; and of course any man thinking the matter over calmly will see what a fatal thing it would be for the State to hand over its borrowing powers to the Commonwealth, because we would be in exactly the same position as in other things relating to the Commonwealth; we would come in last. The Premier said at Bunbury:—

"I am averse to the transfer of our debts to the Commonwealth, but I would be prepared to consider such a transfer provided our right to borrow in the London market were left unimpaired."

That is an important condition. It would be very good if the Commonwealth would do so—the Commonwealth might be able to borrow cheaper than we could—as long as we had the right to say that we wanted a loan and to raise it when we asked, and not at any particular time that suited the convenience of the Commonwealth Government. It would never do for us to be in the position for them to say to us "It is not your turn now; Victoria or New South Wales wants a loan; it is not your opportunity; you can come in in good time." [*Hon. V. Hamersley*: An impossible proposition.] Mr. Kingsmill could not quite see why we required the land tax for revenue purposes. He was not satisfied that the economies promised last year had been effected, and he thought that the increased revenue from the railways would quite meet all requirements. Seeing that we had to do with £190,859 less revenue than we anticipated, and only had a deficit of £88,000 for the year, it proves that we must have economised a little more than we calculated. [*Hon. W. Kingsmill*: What about the Coolgardie Water Scheme and the municipal subsidy?] As the hon. member knows, there was a reduction of 20 per cent. in the municipal subsidy last year, and I think it was mentioned in the policy speech that there would be a farther reduction this year. Of course, as Mr. Sommers says, "Cut your allowance short and you will economise still farther;" but we

might come to the breaking point. We might try a horse with three feeds of corn a day and then try to cut one off, but we might get down to the last straw that would kill the horse. Seeing that the revenue has been so short, it has been quite impossible to do any public works worth speaking of out of revenue, and unfortunately they have had to be constructed out of loan funds. That is not a sound policy, but certain works had to be constructed out of loan funds. The Claremont Lunatic Asylum is a public work which has been constructed with loan money, and I am sure all will agree with the Hon. Mr. Kingsmill that this work was very urgently required. It is certainly against the policy of the Government, and against my own policy, to construct public buildings out of loan; but, in this case, any member who knows the old institution at Fremantle where the unfortunate patients were kept will realise that it was absolutely necessary that a new one should be erected. The Hon. Mr. Kingsmill says that he wrestled with several Treasurers in order to get this work carried out. I have had the same experience as he and I am glad to say that I have been more successful, although the work has to be done out of loan money. We are spending a large sum of money on these buildings and recently contracts were let for the laundry block and four wards at a total cost of £50,000, and tenders are now being called for the construction of three more wards and a machinery block at a cost of £40,000, making a total of £90,000 which will be spent in building operations there during the present year. The new buildings will enable the patients to be much better classified and looked after generally and the result of this will undoubtedly be a higher percentage of recoveries. I am glad to say, however, that the percentage of recoveries is now increasing and this speaks very well indeed for the officer in charge of the institution considering the circumstances in which the patients have now to be housed. The gentleman in charge deserves very great credit for the work he has done. When this amount of works I have referred to is completed we will have sufficient room

to accommodate all the patients we have at the present time and a few more. They will be able to be better classified and treated. It must be remembered that these unfortunates are not criminals but are sick people, and they deserve every sympathy and good treatment. It is anticipated that, when we close the present institutions and have all the patients moved to the new buildings, it will mean a saving in the cost of management of between £2,000 and £3,000 a year. This fact, together with the necessity for providing better accommodation for these unfortunates, surely justifies the Government in the action they have taken—justifies them both from a humanitarian and business standpoint. Unfortunately, and it is a very regrettable fact, this class of patient is on the increase in the State, and I am afraid that the ratio will continue to increase. Some years ago we brought all the youth and strength of the Eastern States here, but the position is different now, for people are getting old and the increase in the number of patients is consequently getting higher every year. It is gratifying, however, to know that, notwithstanding the difficulties which have been laboured under in the past, the cost of treating the patients in the institution has been considerably reduced. In 1902 it cost 16s. 3d. per patient, but now this sum has been reduced to 13s. 2d., a small decrease being shown in each of the last five years. A good deal has been said on the question of the railways, and especially with regard to the appointment of a new Commissioner. I do not intend however to touch on this question at any great length. As is said in the policy speech the Government expect to make a very considerable saving in the working of the railways. The figures show that the approximate cost in Queensland to run their trains is 3s. 0½d., while here it costs as much as 5s. 6d. per train mile. There seems, at first sight, to be a very big difference, and one would say that surely there could be a big saving effected in the working of the railways. Anyhow every effort will be made by the Government to have one effected, but it is only experts who can say how much

will be actually saved. If Parliament approves of the measure we intend to get as Commissioner of Railways the very best man obtainable. In a matter of this kind salary is a mere bagatelle, for where it is a question of a man saving £100,000 or £200,000 a year what does it matter whether he is paid an extra £1,000, £2,000, or £3,000 in salary? It is altogether a question of the man who receives the appointment. I believe with the Hon. Mr. Kingsmill that there is a great opportunity here for a good railway man to make a name for himself. Some members have stated they believe that it is a wrong system to have one Commissioner, and submit that there should be three. I agree with those who think that one should be appointed. If you get the right man the management by one individual is the best. On the other hand if there are three Commissioners it is very problematical whether they will work in with one another. If they do not, nothing but great trouble would result. It must be remembered that it is not easy to get rid of a Commissioner, but, if you have one man at the head of affairs, he can appoint his traffic manager and other departmental managers, and if they do not suit he can change them and get others. It is a very different matter if you have to get rid of a Commissioner. There is evidently a misapprehension as to certain rates charged on the railways and the Hon. Mr. Moss complained bitterly about goods having to be carried at owner's and Commissioner's risks. The hon. member said that this course was not followed in England, but I believe that it is adopted by all railways. It stands to reason that goods can be carried cheaper at owner's than at Commissioner's risk, for, naturally, if you take a risk you must have something for it. The Hon. Mr. Moss was not right when he said that if 20 cases of kerosene were carried at owner's risk and only 15 of them were delivered, no allowance would be made for the loss. The real position is that if goods carried at owner's risk are delivered short the Government have to make the loss good. [Hon. J. A. Thomson: I know that is

a fact.] I know pretty well how it is that the idea originated with regard to owner's risks. The late Commissioner of Railways (Mr. W. J. George) put before the Minister for Railways a regulation exempting the Commissioner from any risk whatever, but the Minister would not endorse it, and consequently the proposed regulation did not become law. The law as it is at present is that when goods are carried at owner's risk, compensation must be granted if they are short delivered. It would be a very dangerous practice if the other system were adopted and would certainly be offering a premium for pilfering. With regard to the goldfields water scheme some members—and I was surprised that the Hon. Mr. Kingsmill was one of them—seemed to think that the £70,000 loss which is occasioned on the working of this scheme each year should be made up directly by the consumers of water. I would point out to them that there is such a thing as charging too high a price for an article. Take for instance tram cars. If the Perth Tramway Company decided to charge half a crown instead of threepence for a ride, some people would utilise the cars but very few, and the net result would be that nothing like the amount would be realised on the half-crown fares as upon the threepenny ones. That is exactly the same with regard to the water scheme. You could sell a certain amount of water at 10s. or even at £1, but it would be only a limited supply. The prices now range from 6s. 8d. at Kalgoorlie, 10s. at Bulong and Kanowna down to 2s. 6d. in some cases. [Hon. W. Kingsmill: One and sixpence for municipal purposes at Southern Cross.] Water has been supplied at that price for sluicing purposes. If we were to increase the present price to 10s. or £1 the total receipts by the department would be much less than they are now.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Well, you look upon it that this loss is to be absolutely a permanent one?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; it is believed that by selling water where we can at a reduced rate, the amount required by the consumers will increase very greatly, and it is noteworthy that

the deficit on the sale of the water is decreasing each year. Is it not a better proposition, that after you have sold a certain amount of water which covers the interest and a portion of the sinking fund, you should try and push trade and sell even down as low as 1s. 6d. a thousand gallons? This is far better than to allow the water to run over the weir. The actual cost of pumping is about 9d. per thousand gallons, and probably an extra 100,000 gallons a day would cost nothing additional. However, to take it at the stated price of 9d., it is better to receive even 1s. and gain a profit of 3d. per thousand gallons, than for the water to run to waste. That is the system on which the scheme is now being worked. Water has been sold down to 1s. 6d. for sluicing, and all will admit that for such purposes it is quite enough to pay. It is only in cases such as this that water is disposed of at so low a price. I was pleased to hear the complimentary remarks about the overland stock route. I think this work will be a remarkably good thing for the country, and the surveyors who carried it out undertook very great dangers and deserve the thanks of this country. Unfortunately one poor man lost his life during the trip. In regard to the dairying industry, the Honorary Minister is quite alive to the necessity for encouraging dairying and farming generally. The importation of dairy cows by the Government may not suit some people, but personally I think it is a splendid move. These cows are not to be sold, as some members evidently imagine, for profit. It is not a trading concern, but they are being brought here for the purpose of developing the dairying industry and will not be sold to dairymen about the town. They will be distributed among the farmers. A gentleman holding a high position here desired to get one of these cows and offered to pay practically any price for it, but he was not able to get it, for these animals will be sold only to *bona fide* farmers and will be disposed of at the least possible cost to them. I do not think I need touch upon the proposed legislation which will be brought down to the House

this session and upon which hon. members will doubtless have a good deal to say when the Bills appear, but I will say this in regard to the Arbitration Act. I cannot agree with hon. members who say that the time has arrived for the repeal of that Act. I admit that it has been a disappointment, but I think it has acted well in some instances and deserves another trial. I do think, however, that certain serious alterations should be made in it, and a Bill that will be introduced here next week will make an amendment to see whether it will not be possible to cast more responsibilities on the men and on their unions. In the past unfortunately the very men by whom the Act was introduced were, by their reckless conduct, the first to cause it partially to fail. Notwithstanding that, the Government would not be justified in repealing it at the present time. If such a proceeding as that which took place recently occurred again or many more times, the Act would have to be repealed. It will be manifestly unfair to have an Act binding on one party and not on another, which is really what it amounts to. With regard to infant life protection, I endorse the remarks of Mr. Kingsmill who has had a longer experience than I have had in the administration of the Act. I agree with him and disagree with Mr. Moss, that it is not suitable to have the Act administered as at present under the local health boards, which boards are rather a week reed to depend on; but the present law is not sufficient, it does not give sufficient protection. I would like to mention that during the discussion which has taken place recently over this matter, by the unfortunate cases which have come before the Supreme Court, it seemed to be thought that nothing at all was being done for the protection of infant life in this State. A great deal has been done by institutions, and by the Government through those institutions, and up to a certain point it is all right; but the question that Mr. Kingsmill speaks about—the South Australian system, is one in which the infant is boarded out, given to a foster mother, or brought up in an institution. There are no two

opinions that if we can get proper homes the boarding system is an ideal system; but up till now, this being a new and unsettled country, it is problematical whether suitable homes could be found for infants. I do not know what would have happened to the infant life of the State in the past if it had not been for our institutions.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : There are plenty of homes now.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I do not know about plenty, but you will get a fair percentage of good homes now. I do not think it is necessary for me to trouble the House longer. I thank members for the kind reception they have given to the Governor's Speech, and the complimentary remarks they have made in reference to the programme of the Government and the administration in general by the Government. It is said by some that the Speech was very optimistic, but I agree with those who have said that if the Government are not optimistic and cannot put forward the good points of the country they are not the Government for the country. The Government ought to be in a position to say what is good about the country, and to make the most of it. We have a country here second to none in Australia, second to none in agricultural and mineral wealth, more particularly in the mineral wealth in the North-Western territory in which we intend to build a railway, and no time will be lost in introducing a Bill for the railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. From the reports made by Mr. Gregory and the State Mining Engineer, I am of opinion that the time is not far distant when there will not only be one, but two railways to open up that country. One will not be sufficient to open up that large belt of mineral country which is known to exist there. Then we have a very promising district which I had the pleasure of going through a few months ago with the Premier, the Black Range district, and I was pleased with the country and the great possibilities there. It is a great auriferous country. The mines are not down a great depth, only 300 or

400 feet, but it is a promising country, there is no question about it, and well worthy of a railway, and that is one of the first railways which will be built in the near future.

Hon. R. W. PENNEFATHER (in reply as mover) : I shall not detain the House very long, but I rise with the greatest pleasure to offer a few remarks before the conclusion of the debate. I am indeed pleased to see the nice tone and temperament displayed by members in addressing themselves to the Speech ; although independence of judgment has been expressed in language clear and lucid, yet it has been done in such a nice inoffensive way that I was quite pleased and charmed indeed to find myself in a Chamber where such was the course of conduct. In fact, it called me back to a certain instance I remember once reading of, an expression used most felicitously in one of Fielding's works ; it describes the care and nicety in which a lover pays addresses to his love. He says in these words, that his language was not so pointed as to alarm, or so vague as to be misunderstood. It was certainly the happy medium, and that expresses in this Chamber the nicety of the expressions that members indulged in : I am pleased and delighted that this is the conduct of this Chamber. I would not of course attempt in a debate of this character to sum up in a full and compendious way the observations passed, or any of them ; but I would like to make reference to one or two observations which fell from Mr. McLarty on the question of the aborigines of the State. He seemed to me to have quite apparently misunderstood the standpoint I took on the subject. He almost said as much as that I championed the aborigines to commit crimes, and to commit depredations, and that they were to be allowed to go unrestricted and unrestrained. Such was the farthest idea from my thoughts. I did not venture on that aspect of the case at all. I spoke out as any other humane person would when he sees these unfortunate creatures in gaol in some of the northern

parts, chained day after day, week after week and month after month to each other; and why? Because it is the most economic way of keeping them under restraint. I see by the newspapers, not later than this morning—you must have seen it, Mr. President—where the Imperial Parliament has had the matter brought under its notice. Members of this Chamber and the people of this State must look to their good fame, and not be held up like the slave-drivers of old who treated their slaves like chattels that had no feeling. Members seem to think that the only proper way to keep those natives who commit depredations on white men's property, is in chains; I repudiate that doctrine. What would be thought of a court or any tribunal here which treated a white man like that? Because the State does not like to go to the expense of constructing a gaol, you are to be chained to your fellow prisoner, and kept like that until you are liberated. But in these civilised parts, for we are now speaking as a civilised country, and speaking to people actuated by humane feelings I hope, to perpetuate this system of chaining is wrong; it must come to an end, or the matter will be brought in such a forcible way not only before this country, but before the British-speaking public that we shall have to bow our heads in shame to the universal censure that is bound to follow. There is only one other subject on which I should like to say a few words before sitting down, and that is a question—the question *par excellence*—that engages the attention of the two Chambers at present; a question practically of finance, the question of administrative reform, but in both respects it leads perhaps to a happy solution of the financial difficulty with which we are surrounded. I allude of course to railway reform. I believe, but may be mistaken, the Government have manifested the intention at the close of the year to look about and select a competent and suitable person to manage the railways. I hope I am mistaken, but if I am not mistaken, why wait until the end of the year to do that? Why wait until the end of the year to allow our railways to be managed practically by the same people who have hither-

to mismanaged them? Look at the loss of revenue for the half year: it shows most undoubtedly where the great leakage is, and once that is stopped there will be no question of taxation. I feel as sure about it as I am of my very existence, and once the leakage is stopped we shall not be troubled farther with the question of taxation or a deficit. And why so? Of course it has been pointed out, and pointed out very strongly and forcibly by Mr. Moss in that address he delivered, not more lengthy I am sure than any member would have wished it, and certainly an effective address it was a pleasure to have to listen to it—he pointed out, and I thoroughly endorse what he says, that if we look at the corresponding State on the other side of the continent, Queensland, that has exactly the same gauge of railway as our own but twice our mileage, that while this system with half the mileage earns £80,000 a year more income than Queensland, it spends £330,000 more than Queensland in order to earn that income. What is the reason of it? There is no doubt, we cannot disguise the fact, that there has been gross mismanagement of a highly extravagant character to cause such an expenditure as that. When I opened the debate I mentioned one or two items: they in themselves constitute a large saving. One item alone is oil at stations and the waste; £20,000 more than Queensland pays we spend in respect of this item. It must be recollected, and the Colonial Secretary knows it because he came from that State, that Queensland is handicapped in many respects as to the railway system; there are five different railway systems in Queensland disconnected with one another. What does that mean? It means an expenditure out of all proportion to what it would be if they had one system where all the repairs could be brought to one shed and effected by one staff, whereas the repairs have to be effected on each system and by independent staffs. With that encumbrance and drawback Queensland is able to make annually on her railways, as it did last year, a saving of £300,000. I do hope the Government will not wait six months before making this radical reform; be-

cause if we wait six months, it means that we are to lose six months of that revenue which we can ill afford to lose. Bearing in mind that the gentleman who is at present temporarily in charge of the railways was practically the first lieutenant to the late Commissioner, and if he knew his duty properly and knew of this great extravagance, it was his duty to take a stand, even independently of the Commissioner. If he knew this extravagance was going on unchecked, he could have made a public remonstrance. [Member: And would have got the sack for doing so.] He would not. If he had done that, he would have brought this question to a head much sooner than it has been. We have certainly to thank Mr. Chinn for his able articles illustrating this subject, tackling it in a manner in which no other man has hitherto tackled it in this State. He has brought his figures into such relief that any man walking or running may read, and in doing so he has rendered a great public service. He has shown us where the leakage is, and it is for us to remedy it. I hope there will be no farther delay in changing the management of the railway system, because directly that management is changed for improved methods, I believe there are better days to come. There are many subjects in the speeches of members which I might touch on in reply, but I do not venture to do so. I wish to make this observation in passing, that I am pleased at the evident desire and anxiety shown by the Colonial Secretary to oblige members of this Chamber, and for this I desire to thank him most cordially. It would appear that we have in this House one or two members who agree that the franchise for this Chamber ought to be reduced. When this cry for a reduced franchise is boiled down, it resolves itself into a plea for one Chamber. If a man tells you straight out that he is in favour of one Chamber, that discounts at once his honesty of purpose in asking for a reduction of the franchise to £15. Suppose the franchise were brought down to £15, we would be met by a request for a farther reduction, the advocate of which would

say "Fifteen pounds is too high, I know many honest men who ought to have a vote but who had not got £15; so why not bring it down to £10?"—or perhaps £5. Then when it has been brought down to £5, the argument for only one Chamber becomes irresistible. We would be told, "There is only a difference of £5 between this class of elector and that class; therefore what is the necessity for two Chambers?" That argument would then be irresistible. [Hon. J. W. Wright: Have only this Chamber.] Exactly; but I should like to know how the hon. member would fare if he were to advocate having only this Chamber, before those who desire only one Chamber. It is not a matter of levelling up, but of levelling down; and I hope the day is far distant when that will be brought about. Members of this House know full well that it is not sincere, not *bona fide*, to say that a reduction in the franchise for this House is necessary in the interest of good order and good Government. I beg to thank the House for its patience in listening to my observations, and have much pleasure in again moving the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the Colonial Secretary, the House adjourned at 8.35 o'clock until Tuesday, 23rd instant.
