

no justification for not exercising the strictest economy : it is being exercised ; but I say that the resources of the country are as good to-day, in fact better than they were 10 years ago.

Hon. J. Kirwan : But at that time we were not face to face with the Brad-don Clause difficulty.

Hon. G. Randell : At that time 13,000 or 14,000 people left the State.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Never mind about Federation ; we have millions of acres of agricultural land, more than we dreamt of in those days.

Hon. R. F. Sholl : And you are buying more.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Yes ; and cutting them up into small holdings. The mines are in an infinitely better position to-day than they were in those days. We used to say on the goldfields, "These are beautiful mines;" but we had no right to say that, because the mines then were not proved. Since those days our agricultural country has improved, and the mines have been proved to a great depth, and are just as likely to last our life time, if not longer. It is satisfactory to see the development of our mines, and although it has only taken place in a few deep mines, that is because there are only a few deep mines in the State. But it proves that the lodes go down, and if they go down in one place there is no reason why they should not go down all over the place. Mr. McKenzie mentioned that on the Golden Mile rich gold had been found where thousands of men had walked every day. That may mean another mine, which is something, or it may mean more, but it proves the vast possibilities of the country. If that gold could lie in such a spot undiscovered all this time, what a number of mines may be found in that vast area known to be auriferous almost without break from Norseman to Peak Hill? When we think of the resources of the State I do not think we have anything to fear. It must also be remembered that the agricultural railways we construct are responsible for expenditure of interest and sinking fund, but we will not get the benefit of revenue from those lines until the land is

in a producing state and the people are living along the lines. Then, not only will the lines be paying, but we will be deriving other revenue from those producers. That will undoubtedly come to pass. Therefore, looking at things from all points of view, I think we have nothing to fear in this State, but that everything is satisfactory.

Question put and passed ; the Address adopted and ordered to be presented to the Governor.

House adjourned at 8.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 19th November, 1908.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m., and read prayers.

KURRAWANG WOOD STRIKE, TERMINATION.

The TREASURER (Hon. Frank Wilson) : I would like to inform the House that I have received a telegram from Mr. Brophy, Sub-Inspector of Police, which reads, "The Premier desires me to inform you that the Kurrawang wood strike is now practically ended. Truck loading and cutting and carting are in full swing."

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the *Treasurer*: 1, Land Titles' Department—Annual Report, 1907-08; 2, Commissioner of Police—Report, 1907-08; 3, Fremantle Harbour Trust—Report, 1907-08.

QUESTION—FURNITURE TRADE, ASIATIC LABOUR.

Mr. DAGLISH asked the Premier: 1, What number of Asiatics are employed in the cabinet-making and furniture trade in this State? 2, What number of Europeans are similarly employed? 3, Has the annual registration fee of £5 per annum for each Asiatic employed in a factory been invariably and systematically collected? 4, Will the Government make special efforts to secure the strict enforcement of those provisions in the Factories Act which govern the employment of Asiatics?

The *TREASURER* (for the Premier) replied: 1, Seventy-three. 2, One hundred and four. 3, The Act does not provide for a £5 fee for each Asiatic, but for each factory occupied by Asiatics. This provision has been enforced as far as possible. 4, Yes, as far as possible.

QUESTION—RAILWAY WORKSHOPS, STEEL FURNACES.

Mr. BATH asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to provide for the immediate erection of steel furnaces at the Midland Junction Workshops so that railway requirements can be manufactured in this State?

The *TREASURER* (for the Premier) replied: The Railway Department has been asked to report as to the desirability of erecting a steel furnace at the Midland Junction Workshops.

QUESTION — STATE BATTERIES, TEST OF PARTS.

Mr. BATH asked the Premier: What was the result of the comparative test of hard iron shoes and dies for the State Batteries manufactured at the Government Workshops, Fremantle, in comparison with the imported article?

The *TREASURER* (for the Premier) replied: The trial of the shoes and dies manufactured at the Government Workshops, Fremantle, proved that the white hematite iron is not comparable with the fagotted steel used in the imported article.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL RAILWAYS, RESULTS.

Mr. BATH asked the Premier: Do the figures quoted by him, specifying the loss sustained in newly-constructed railways, include the amount provided for interest and sinking fund on the capital cost of these lines?

The *TREASURER* (for the Premier) replied: No.

QUESTION—MENZIES ELECTION, RAILWAY OFFICERS ASSISTING.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Premier: 1, Is it true that Mr. Simpson, examiner in the Perth Government Goods Yard, has been given special leave to go to Menzies to assist Mr. Gregory in his election campaign? 2, Is this the same Mr. Simpson who at the Minister's office personally perused the departmental files containing the Minister's and the Commissioner's (Mr. George's) minutes in reference to the Sunday time question? 3, Why is this employee singled out for special favours? 4, Is he aware that Mr. Simpson has wired to another railway employee, a Mr. Richards, locomotive fireman, urging him to also visit Menzies to assist Mr. Gregory, his expenses being guaranteed? 5, Is it true that Mr. Richards immediately secured leave of absence, and is now in Menzies? 6, How is it that these men are so easily spared while others whose leave is due have had their applications refused?

The *TREASURER* (for the Premier) replied: 1, Mr. Simpson applied for special leave on urgent private business, and it was granted to him without pay. The Commissioner of Railways has no knowledge of the nature of that business. 2, The Commissioner does not know. 3, This employee has not been singled out

for special favours. Special leave, without pay, is granted to any employee who applies for same and who can be spared. 4, No. 5, Mr. Richards applied for special leave, without pay, and it was granted him. 6, The number of men who can be spared at one time is limited. Only one man's application has been delayed, owing to the disablement of an examiner through an accident.

QUESTION—TENDER BOARD INQUIRY.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Premier : When the report of inquiry made into the cases of Messrs. Benbow and Cant, of the Government Tender Board, will be made public ?

The TREASURER (for the Premier) replied : The reports are now under consideration of the Appeal Board, to whom Mr. Benbow has appealed against the Public Service Commissioner's findings. The Appeal Board will, in due course, communicate its decision to His Excellency the Governor. Until then the matter is *sub judice*.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CORRIDOR CARS.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Premier : When will the figures giving result of test made in connection with the manufacture of corridor cars between Midland Junction State Works and Messrs. Hudson & Ritchie (Westralia Iron Works, Ltd.) be made public ?

The TREASURER (for the Premier) replied : The figures have been called for, and after consideration will be made public.

QUESTION—LAW REPORTS, TEN- DERS FOR BINDING.

Mr. SWAN asked the Attorney General : 1. Did the Crown Law Department recently let a contract for binding 450 Law Reports ? 2. If so, who were the successful tenderers ? 3. Was this contract open to public competition ? 4. If so, will the Minister give list of tenderers and tenders received ? 5. Is

the work being done within the State ? 6. If so, where ?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied : 1, A contract was let by the Government Tender Board on the recommendation of the Crown Law Department. 2, The Law Book Company of W.A. (Late Bull & Hale.) 3, Quotations were obtained from all known firms. 4, All tenders received are quasi confidential documents, and, with the exception of the tender actually accepted, should not be published. There is no objection, however, to allowing the hon. member to peruse same for his own information. 5, Yes. 6, In Perth.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. MALE (Kimberley) : It is my intention as far as possible to make my remarks on the Address-in-Reply as short as I can. Unlike the mover of the Address-in-Reply I do not consider this debate as absolutely useless, but I am rather inclined to have the same opinion as the Leader of the Opposition in saying that this debate has some purpose to fulfil, and it gives members the opportunity of speaking on matters affecting their own particular districts, which opportunity might not occur again during the session. In looking through the Governor's Speech I cannot find a great deal that calls for attention. The principal items seem to me to be the Bills dealing with licensing, vermin extermination, and the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to roads boards. In connection with the Bill in respect to roads boards, as we have been supplied with very little information regarding it, it leaves practically nothing for us to debate; but the fact remains that such a Bill is required, and the sooner we can get it passed I think it will be better for the whole State. It will have to be a Bill comprehensive and wide in its scope, and in my opinion the Government will be wisely advised if they do not attempt to press the measure further than the second reading during the present session. A Bill of this nature

not only requires full discussion in the House but outside also it requires to be well ventilated, and a copy of it should be sent to the different roads boards throughout the State so that later on we may have the advantage of their advice and criticism before finally putting it through the House.

The Minister for Works: That is the intention of the Government.

Mr. MALE: I might also make the same remarks apply to the Licensing Bill. When we consider the amount of criticism and discussion and debate that was occasioned in England over a similar measure, I do not think we can for a moment hope to pass any extensive measure in this State before it has been well discussed everywhere. Whatever the opinions may be on local option and the other matters which will be dealt with in the Bill, they will so alter and affect the present legislation, that we should not do anything hurriedly, but give it full consideration. The Vermin Extermination Bill is one which particularly interests me and the district which I represent. Some three years ago I attended a deputation which waited on the Premier and we were at that time promised that such a Bill would be introduced in this House. Members on both sides of the House have on several occasions waited on the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture to know when this Bill would be forthcoming, and judging by the Governor's Speech it really appears as if this Bill will at last see daylight. I contend that it is the duty of the Government to protect the unoccupied lands in this State, as well as the lands and leases held by our farmers and squatters, against rabbits, dingoes and other pests that abound. Already something has been done. For several years past we have had a bonus for the destruction of dingoes, and also a grant towards the destruction of kangaroos; and I may say that Kimberley has set a good example, inasmuch as for several years they have granted pound for pound with the Government for the extermination of kangaroos on the Fitzroy. So effective has that been that in a period of under two years they succeeded in exterminating something over a

quarter of a million kangaroos. I believe a special feature of this Bill will be the constituting of district boards somewhat similar to the roads boards, and that these boards will have the power of levying rates and making rules and regulations which they will be able to carry into effect. Our duty as members of Parliament, and I think the duty of the Government also, is to endeavour, if possible, to develop the lands of the State and to maintain them in good order and condition. We know it is not possible to carry out a developmental policy for the whole of this State, but I contend that even if we are not able to do that we can at least maintain this large estate that is given into our care in good order and condition. Are we doing this? Are we doing our duty in this respect, maintaining it in the same good order and condition as it was handed over to us? I rather doubt whether we are, in all respects. It was only a month ago when I was in the North that I received a telegram from La Grange Bay stating that rabbits had arrived at that point. This proves the contention I have long maintained that the rabbit-proof fence that finishes at Wallal on the North-West coast is an incomplete job; because, although it has protected the lands inside the fence, it has had the effect of sending the rabbits straight to Kimberley many years before they should have reached there. On every possible occasion I have tried to drum into the Premier and the Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department and others the need for protecting the Kimberleys from the rabbits. Something was done. I suggested that it might be possible to erect a wing fence from the present fence that would turn the rabbits back, and the Minister sent out an inspector to report on the work and to see if it was possible to do anything in that direction. The officer inspected the country and the conclusion he came to was that the country was capable of carrying rabbits, and on that contention it would be inadvisable to erect a wing fence. It appears to me that since the Government have received that report they have done nothing to try to stop the rabbits going into Kimberley. But we find that the rabbits have

reached the end of the fence. They have travelled across the 80-Mile Beach, that is a dry stage, and it appears to me that it is only a matter of a few months before they will be on the banks of the Fitzroy; and once they are on the banks of the Fitzroy and the rivers and creeks of Kimberley nothing the Government can do will exterminate them from that district. It appears to me that the only thing that can be done now is to get this Bill through the House and have district boards appointed. These boards will be able to take in hand the rabbit question as affecting each particular district. I think it would be useless to attempt the construction of long miles of fencing such as have been erected in the past, but in my opinion the best thing would be for these district boards to lay out a scheme of fencing that would include most of the valuable areas in use. They could get a grant of the netting and material required from the Government, and assistance for the erection of the same. They would then be able to levy a rate on all squatters deriving any benefit from the particular fence, while I think that where the fence is adjacent to the property of any squatter it would be quite possible to make that particular person look after the maintenance and upkeep of the fence without going to the expense of having Government boundary riders such as we now have. Our pastoral lands have of necessity to be taken up by men with capital and men with grit who have been able to stand up for many years before they have been able to reap any advantage from their holdings. When we consider the long distance the North is from the South, and the inaccessibleness of getting there in the past either for themselves or their stock, we can quite understand that it was only men of means who were able to go and develop and open up those valuable lands of the North. I say that great credit is due to those men who went there and pioneered this country, and to them are due the rewards of success if they have reaped any. Even now I still maintain that to open up the large area of unoccupied land that still exists in the North it needs men of capital to carry out the work, and until

the Government are prepared to take the matter in hand on similar lines to those they are following in endeavouring to open up the agricultural lands in the South, by assistance to what we call the small man, we cannot hope to see the vacant land in the North settled by small squatters. Let us take, for instance, the country between the De Grey and Fitzroy Rivers. There is a coast line of 400 to 500 miles with no rivers and no natural water whatever. That land in its natural state is valueless; it cannot be made use of for the purposes of stock until wells have been sunk and water has been conserved in different portions of it. We cannot expect a man without capital to go there and open up and develop that land; and while we find the Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department and the Government devoting the whole of their time and attention to settling farmers on the agricultural lands in the South-West district, we cannot hope for any alteration in the squatting conditions as they now exist. That the Government might do much I know is certain, and when they are ready to take this question in hand in the same energetic manner as they have taken in hand the settlement of our agricultural lands, there is much that can be done, and even now I still maintain that there is something they can do. I advocate that the Government be allowed to sink bores on stations that already exist for the purpose of assisting the squatters. These artesian bores might be paid for by the squatters by charging them interest and sinking fund. That would cover the cost in a reasonable time, and then when the pastoral leases fall due the bores will be a valuable asset to the State. This is only asking the Government to carry out similar work in the North to what they are carrying out in the South. But what will do more to stimulate the squatting industry more than anything else at present, is the erection of freezers where they are required. That they are required there is not the slightest doubt for the development of the industry and for the purpose of building up that great export trade that Western Australia must have. I was greatly surprised on arriv-

ing South to find that so much election capital, if I might say so, has been made out of the question of the Wyndham freezers. I am even told that the Wyndham freezers have been responsible for the loss of many seats to the Government. Well, all I can say is that I regret the loss of these seats, and my regret is the more sincere when I find that we have not even got the freezers as compensation for the loss of the seats. I have not had an opportunity of reading the agreement, but so far as I can see the bargain from the Government point of view was an absolutely safe and sound one. They have had undoubtedly the better of the deal, and I am led to believe that so much so was theirs the better of the deal that there is every probability of the scheme falling through. That freezers are required I am fully convinced. The position now is that the supply of fat cattle in this State is larger than the demand, with the result that we find between 10,000 and 20,000 head of stock sent overland to Queensland and the Eastern States every year, which stock I maintain should be treated in our own State. The station properties are not increasing and developing in the way they should. Provided we had freezers, or some means of marketing the surplus stock, I am fully convinced that the Kimberleys could produce three times the quantity of stock produced at the present time.

Mr. Bolton: At three times the price.

Mr. MALE: Let me point to this fact, that the Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department was greatly exercised a year or two ago when he found that wheat and lambs were not fetching what he called the London prices in this State. What did he do? He did his level best to build up an export trade so that they would secure the export price, and we found no outcry from the public at that time that the export of our wheat and lambs would increase the price of bread or meat, because the people in the State were quite willing to assist the farmers in getting a better price for their produce. So I say that while we have surplus stock in the North it is a fair thing that the Government should be backed up in their

endeavours to obtain a market for that stock. Personally, I do not advocate the erection of Government freezers in such a far distant place as Wyndham. I would much prefer to see work of that nature carried out by private enterprise, or, if necessary, carried out by private enterprise with the assistance of the Government to initiate and start the industry; but if private enterprise is not able to carry out that work then I am so firmly convinced of the need for it that I will support the erection of Government freezers at Wyndham, Carnarvon, or wherever they are required. Representing as I do an industry of an unique nature, but still of much value to this State, it will perhaps be well for me to make a few remarks about it. That is the pearling industry. Personally I desire to thank the Premier and the Government for the very timely and valuable assistance rendered to the pearlers at the beginning of the year when that dreadful blow came and caused so much havoc to the industry; when we lost something like 130 valuable lives, besides a large amount of property. The Government promptly responded to the calls for assistance at that time, and I can assure them and members on both sides of the House who expressed their sympathy with the pearlers, that the men there greatly appreciated that sympathy and assistance. I am pleased to say that, owing to an advance in the price of their product, they are from a financial point of view fast recovering from that great disaster, although we must recognise the fact that even the financial position will not compensate for the valuable lives lost. It has been contended by a good many, and apparently that belief is held by the member for Pilbara (*Mr. Underwood*), that the industry is not worked in the interests of our own people, and that the profits are not retained by us. With regard to the hon. member I would like to say that he has never been to Broome and therefore has not a great deal more knowledge than many of those living in the South. I wish to contradict that impression and to point out that the industry is being worked for the benefit of the State and the Commonwealth, and that the profits derived from it are being

retained here. From an export point of view this industry comes fourth in the State. First comes the mining, then wool, then timber, and next pearling. From a revenue point of view Broome comes third among the customs revenue ports of Western Australia. The industry at the present time is conducted by some 330 boats. I believe the old impression, and probably the present one, is that those boats belong to a few individuals and are worked by a large number of coloured men.

Mr. Taylor: How many white men are there in the industry?

Mr. MALE: That such was the position years ago is much more true than now, and I would point out this fact, and I can speak with a certain amount of authority considering I have been connected with the industry for some 16 years, that pearling is an industry for what we call the small man. I am convinced that the position is such that the small man is becoming more and more associated with it every day. I am proud that the pearling industry in Western Australia is working out its own salvation, and that we are making it an industry for the small man, an industry for the State and an industry for the white man. I may say here that the people at Broome, the pearlers as a class, are as much in favour of the white Australian principle and policy as the people living down here.

Mr. Taylor: What nonsense.

Mr. MALE: It is not nonsense. Since we have introduced what I may call the small man system the people are as true white Australians as any in the land. They are endeavouring to make the industry as truly a white Australian one as possible. What is the position? We find in Queensland they have 110 boats held by six owners or firms. Those give an average of over 18 boats to each individual or firm. Here there are 330 boats owned by 111 owners or firms, giving us an average of under three boats per owner or firm. If I were to analyse the boats held by firms it would be found that the firms do not have hundreds of shares in each, divided among hundreds of shareholders, but are really partnership concerns consisting of two, three or four

individuals. It is safe to say that the average ownership of boats held by these firms is under two boats per man. That means that Broome, which was a very small place a few years ago, is now the most flourishing place in the North. We have a fine town, with macadamised roads well watered every day, and with ice, bakers' and butchers' carts going around. It is an up-to-date place. It is the small owners who have made it so. Where there were only a few owners a few years ago now there are many. The 111 owners to whom I have referred represent 111 men who are living there with their wives and families; more than that, they represent the white men those owners have in their employ: they represent the merchants, the storekeepers, the tradesmen, the employees on the wharves and all the people engaged in connection with maintaining the town and industry.

Mr. Taylor: What is the white population of Broome?

Mr. MALE: When I looked at the roll for the recent elections I found that between four and five hundred names were on the roll in Broome alone.

Mr. Taylor: You do not say what colour they are.

Mr. MALE: They are as white as the hon. member. The two or three individuals, British subjects, who are not so white in colour as the hon. member outside, but who are perhaps quite as white inside, were struck off the roll. Why they were struck off I do not know, but I intend to find out. A naturalised British subject has as much right to be on the roll as a Britisher.

Mr. Angwin: Are they Asiatics?

Mr. MALE: Yes; and they are on the Commonwealth roll and have voted here for years. The Act has not been altered and is the same as the old Act in that respect. If we admit these men as naturalised subjects, and they are subject to the disadvantages and the paying of rates, etcetera, surely they should be given the advantage of the franchise. It has been pointed out that the profits from the industry are not retained by us. I admit that a certain sum goes out of the industry in the shape of wages, but for

that small amount we are reaping ten or twentyfold.

Mr. Walker: Where do the wages go ?

Mr. MALE : Some of them go to Asia. Let me point this out. It has not been possible for several years past to increase the number of coloured men employed in the industry. Owing to the regulations provided by the Government four or five years ago, it was decided that the industry should not be allowed to increase by the influx of additional coloured men ; but, for the maintenance of the industry, it was permitted that when men were returned to Singapore or the place from whence they came the owner should be allowed to replace those men. Let me tell you what the owner has to do in order to replace them. In the first instance he must send a telegram for every individual to the Minister for External Affairs, and obtain from him a permit to import a man to replace the one going away. The Minister for External Affairs has his officers in Broome, who have to see that the man is exported before another is brought to replace him. These men have not come to Western Australia as immigrants, as citizens or tradesmen, to interfere with this part of the State, but they come down, and on their arrival must be signed on, on British articles, as British seamen. They are not allowed to come into the State, but are only allowed to remain in port while their boat is there. There is not the slightest danger of their interfering with the white Australia policy or principle. As regards the profits and what becomes of them, I believe the member for Pilbara intimated that the shell was sent away and that the profits all went out of the State. That is not correct. In the annual report as to the fishing industry there is given a list of the owners of the boats representing the industry in the State. True, shell is sent away to be sold, and the reason for that is there is no market or use for it here, but every penny of the money comes back to the State in the shape either of merchandise or cash. The State and the Commonwealth are getting the full benefit of the profits made from the pearling industry. I would

not get up here and make these remarks unless I were confident that what I say is true. I only wish members would take the opportunity, when they have the time, to visit Broome and the pearling industry and find out for themselves the truth of what I am saying.

Mr. Angwin : Reduce the rates and we might be able to.

Mr. MALE : I have asked the member for Pilbara to make the journey so that he could subsequently come here and speak with authority. I feel sure that when he has looked into the matter properly he will be convinced that he had erroneous ideas when speaking the other night. I contend that in proportion to its size, the industry is more valuable even than the mining industry of which we hear so much, the reason being that the profits of the latter are to a very great extent sent out of the State in the shape of dividends. For every ounce of gold taken out the wealth of the State is reduced by that much, but for every ton of shell exported other shell grows to take its place. It is recuperative. An inspection of the beds shows that the shell is breeding all the time. Gold is not. This industry has been going on year after year for the last twenty years and what do we find ? If members read the Fisheries report for the year they will find that we exported 200 tons more of pearl-shell last year than the year before. We have been increasing the output of shell, and are working on those self-same beds that we have been working on for the last 12 years. When you consider that we have a coast-line of 1,500 miles, all shell bearing, and only 300 boats working on it, I say there is no fear of the depletion of our beds. We can be quite content on that score. In fact, we are able to ship more shell now than we were able to do ten years ago. Then the hon. member made some reference to gunboats. Why ? Again he said that if the industry were closed down it would still be worked by boats coming from other places. I do not think the hon. member was quite clear of his ground there. He forgot that there is such a thing as a 3-mile limit in international law, and he forgot or did not know that

the bulk of the pearl-shell comes from outside the 3-mile limit. Now, if they were to send the wonderful gunboat to interfere with boats outside the 3-mile limit, I would not like to say where that gunboat would get to. You cannot interfere with a foreign flag working outside the 3-mile limit; you can interfere with a British flag because of what is known as the ex-territorial waters, but not with a foreign flag. I trust the time may never come when foreign flags will work on our pearl beds. That industry belongs to us by right, and I say by right we should maintain that industry for ourselves, but do not let us run the danger of driving it into the hands of the foreigner.

Mr. Angwin : Or Britishers working under a foreign flag.

Mr. MALE : No, I should be sorry to see anything of the sort, and I think we should do everything we can to avoid it. There are only one or two other questions to which I would like to refer. There is the great high-road to the North, which is the ocean, and I say that in respect to this we have some right to receive consideration from the Government. I am pleased to find that something is being done towards the lighting of this coast. I would like to point out one fact, that I came down the coast about a fortnight ago in a steamer. The steamer was taken alongside the jetty at Point Sampson, and there was not so much as a tallow candle to guide us there in the dark. Had it not been for the careful navigation and the good handling of her skipper we would never have got alongside the jetty. It is disgraceful; we want some consideration; we want lights and buoys along that coast.

Mr. Angwin : Who has charge of that jetty?

Mr. MALE : I doubt if anybody has charge of it. If I may trespass on another man's preserves, I would like to point to the condition of the water supply at Port Hedland. It is not disgraceful, because it does not exist. In March last the people of Hedland were dependent on a lighter to bring them drinking water from Condon. It is a sorry state of affairs to be in existence at the port

from which the Hedland-Marble Bar railway is to start. My advice would be to try with an artesian bore to obtain an ample supply of water.

The Minister for Works : Would you put your bore down against the advice of the Government Geologist?

Mr. MALE : Yes, and for this reason. A bore was put down in Broome and it was not put down on the advice of the Government Geologist but in face of the fact that we were told we had no hope of getting water. I am glad to say we did strike it, and I think for the expenditure of £3,000 or £4,000 on an experimental bore it might be worth the speculation. The chances are we will not strike water, but if we do, it would be the salvation of the town and district.

The Minister for Works : The Engineer-in-Chief was referring to this only yesterday. It is one of the subjects of his inquiries up there.

Mr. MALE : I do not profess to be an expert on the matter, but the question is a serious one and something should be done at once. We cannot expect people to go there and live and take their wives and families there if there be no proper water supply. At the present time the water is not there at all. Whether my advice be good or not I cannot say, but it is the best I can give. Another little matter is the control of the police in the North, and I refer more particularly to those in Kimberley. I found out only a few months ago that the police were not, in my opinion, receiving fair treatment. Knowing as we do, judging as we may judge by recent events, by the fearful tragedy which occurred at Turkey Creek a few months ago, that they often have to go out carrying their lives in their hands, I say that in the circumstances the least we can do is to give them fair treatment. The matters I refer to are the items of passages up and down the coast, tropical allowances and annual leave. I say that the police in the North should receive the same good consideration as any other civil servants residing in the North. But what do we find? That they have been only allowed to have steerage passages for themselves and their wives. We know

that steerage passages on steamers trading up that coast are not always the most desirable for women whatever they may be for men. Yet if a constable or corporal wishes to take his wife to the North by saloon passage he is penalized for the difference. Since my return I find that a regulation has been issued to the effect that they will be granted saloon passages for the future. Now, respecting tropical allowances. All other civil servants, including gaolers and warders, who surely only come on a par with the police, are allowed a percentage on their wages, while the police are allowed a lump sum of £30. I say they should be put on the same scale as other civil servants. Then there is their leave. They get only one month's leave per annum, and that starts from the day they knock off work, whether at Hall's Creek, at Wyndham, or at Derby, and expires on their return to their station. Now, knowing as we do that it would take over a month to get from Fremantle and back from Hall's Creek, what, I may ask, is the good of that one month's leave? Again, that leave is not allowed to accumulate. So at the end of three years they are still entitled to only one month. Now in other departments the leave is allowed to accumulate, to what extent I am not quite certain; but I do say that when we consider that a constable who is sent up there is expected to endure for three years the hardships of climate and of travel, and sometimes to take his life in his hands, then surely he is entitled to some consideration. If a man has served up there for a period of three years he is surely entitled to something more than one month's leave. I say at least let that leave accumulate, and at the end of three years give him some reasonable holiday, to start from the time he reaches Fremantle. I think it is iniquitous. When a man has to put in three years up there, contending against hardship, he requires some time to recoup his health and to recompense him for it all, and I say that on his arrival in Fremantle his holiday should start. If he only got one month it would be better than nothing, but I think his leave should be allowed to accumulate, and that at the end of his term

he should be given six weeks or two months.

Mr. *Anguin*: The Treasurer has promised to give attention to that matter.

Mr. MALE: I think it is a matter that will receive attention, but unless these things are brought under the notice of the Government, there is a tendency for them to slide.

Mr. SWAN (North Perth): I did not intend to speak on this question at all. So far as the Governor's Speech is concerned hon. members will agree with me that there is not a great deal to talk about. But certain remarks have fallen from hon. members during the discussion which have made me feel it is necessary for me to have something to say. In the first place, I want to say a word or two about what I consider the Premier's excuse for the defeat at North Perth. The Premier tells us that the success of the Labour candidate at North Perth was due to the misrepresentation by one of the candidates of the proposition to loan to the people of the North-West £35,000 for the construction of freezing works. Considering the Government candidate for North Perth told the electors that he was entirely opposed to the granting of this £35,000 for freezing works, and I believe every candidate at that election was opposed to the granting of the £35,000, I fail to see why the opposition of Mr. Le Mesurier should be held responsible for the defeat of the Government candidate. In my opinion, the defeat of the Government candidate was due to the superior intelligence and discrimination of the electors of North Perth in selecting a representative of a party with a definite, broad and national policy, in opposition to a blind supporter of a party that in my opinion has yet to manufacture its policy. I do not think anyone can say that the reasoning of the Premier in that regard is at all logical; in any case I suppose it will serve as an excuse for those gentlemen who wish to see an excuse put up for their defeat. I do not think it is of any value. I never left any doubt in the minds of the people of North Perth, in addressing them, as to my attitude to-

wards the Government. I made it clear to them that I was an all out opponent of the present Government, and to that and the explanation of the Labour platform to the best of my ability was due my success, notwithstanding the excuses of the Premier and various portions of the Press of the State. I have heard a good deal of congratulation. I have heard the Ministers congratulated by members not only on their own side but by members on this (Opposition) side on their past administration. I am very sorry I cannot join in the congratulations at all. As I said before, I am entirely opposed to the past administration of the Government, and I sincerely hope they will show a great improvement in the future. The only room I find for congratulation is in the direction of congratulating the member for Claremont on his neat exposition of socialism last night. Personally, I would be pleased if I were able to expound the policy of the Labour party as well as the member for Claremont did on that occasion. The only thing I cannot understand about it is that Mr. Foulkes remains on the Government side of the House when there is a vacant chair on this side. I would like to see the member change his position in accordance with his views. The member for York took upon himself to chastise members on the Opposition side of the House on account of the empty benches due to the absence of some members of the Labour party in the Menzies electorate. I wish to say as an hon. member of the Labour party that I feel extremely proud to think that the members of this party are absent in Menzies fighting a man whom the electors of Menzies passed out and against whose policy every mining constituency in the State has declared. I think it is a matter to be proud of that our members are ready to rally round the man who has, in my opinion, been so unjustly dealt with as Mr. Buzacott has. The only reason I am not there myself is that I doubt if my assistance would be of any value. If I thought by going to Menzies it would be of any material assistance to Mr. Buzacott, that is where I would be instead of in the House to-night. We have heard a

good deal about the Menzies election. As far as I am concerned I do not wish to question the finding of the learned Judge. I do not pretend to set up my opinion on matters of law against a gentleman in his position, but I do say that if his opinion is a correct interpretation of the law we cannot compliment the Attorney General on his capacity for framing electoral laws. I understand, when introducing amendments to the Electoral Bill, the Attorney General expressed his desire to avoid anything of this kind in the future, in view of what had taken place previously in East Fremantle and Geraldton. I think members will agree with me that he has failed miserably with regard to the postal votes. I agree to a large extent with the contention of the member for Pilbara that these sections require amendment, if it is not altogether necessary to abolish the provision for postal voting. It would be preferable to abolish the provisions for postal voting than allow the position to arise such as we have at present in Menzies. Among the congratulations that the present Ministry have received I notice the member for Roebourne has been in the forefront in that action. Considering the member when addressing the electors of Roebourne advocated a redistribution of seats Bill on an area basis, if members will consider what the result of that redistribution would be, they can form a correct opinion of the congratulations of the member for Roebourne. The Premier made a boast the other day of the courage of the Ministry in proposing a tax on unimproved land values. I am sorry their courage did not carry them further. As far as I am concerned not much is being derived from the present land tax, and I think, if the Ministry had only managed to keep up a little more courage and impose such a tax, that would have brought the vacant lands lying along the existing railways under cultivation, there would have been something substantial to their credit, and I would have been in the position of other members, extending congratulations to them, but I cannot

see anything in that direction to congratulate them upon.

The Honorary Minister : What taxes would you suggest ?

Mr. SWAN: Not the so-called tax introduced last session.

The Honorary Minister : Suggest some alternative.

Mr. SWAN: It would be something that would be more effective. One thing in my opinion, it would remove the necessity for the proposed further extension of the agricultural railway system. I do not think it is perhaps the correct thing as a new member to set myself up to criticise members with more experience than myself, but on that question I have a fixed opinion, and it gives me pleasure indeed to vote against any further extension of the agricultural railway system until I see the Ministry doing something definite in the way of opening up the land along the existing line of railway.

The Honorary Minister : Would you vote against roads too ?

Mr. SWAN: I am not prepared to go into that question. The Premier also promises the early opening up of the karri forests in the South-West, a very desirable thing I believe, but not if they are opened up for the purpose that other forests seem to have been opened up for, the exploitation by combines. I hope more discretion will be used in opening up the karri forests and that they will not be opened up by the Government to allow the timber combines to exploit the timber resources of the State. In connection with the South-West I believe not only in the timber industry but there are great possibilities in that district for the dairying industry. The picture painted by the member for Pilbara the other day of the dairying industry was not a very pleasant one, but I can vouch absolutely for the picture he painted; I have seen it myself. I was born in a dairying district, and know something about that particular matter. I think without these conditions there is a big future for the dairying industry of the State if properly handled, and assisted by the Government. It could be carried out successfully without turn-

ing the families of the farmers into white slaves. There is another matter that I am not satisfied with the action of the Government upon and that is the Saturday half-holiday question. Before the House met I was strongly of opinion that the Colonial Secretary adopted a very spineless attitude in dealing with the question. I listened the other day to an explanation of the Colonial Secretary's action by the Minister for Works, and whilst he endeavoured to make out the best possible case for his colleague, he entirely failed to satisfy me that he took up a statesmanlike attitude on the question. I certainly think it was not a display of statesmanship. One thing will have to be carefully watched and that is to make things uniform for the whole metropolitan district. The position that will be brought about on the first of December according to proclamation is an absurd position. While in Perth proper shopkeepers will have the option of closing on either of the two days the business people in the suburban localities will be obliged to open on Saturday. That is how I understand it. I do not know if that is correct or not. If that is the case, I do not think it is at all satisfactory. However, when the Bill is introduced I hope we shall be able to bring our brains to bear on it, and evolve something superior to what has been produced by the Colonial Secretary. There is another matter, quite a very serious matter in my opinion, that is the question of the unemployed. While some effort is being made to cope with that trouble, I fear the Government do not realise the seriousness of the position. I fear that too much notice is being taken of the fact that certain individuals who are generally prominent in unemployed demonstrations are to be found there at the present time. The fact that these particular individuals are mixed up with the unemployed does not guarantee that the whole thing is wrong. I am satisfied that men I have known for years are absolutely willing to take work and just as unable to find it. These men have wives and families depending upon them and the responsibility devolves on the

Ministry of finding work for them to prevent them from starvation. I am very well-known in Perth and if my Parliamentary salary were equal to that of the Treasurer, I could not cope with the number of demands that I have made upon me, for a few shillings, by unemployed. I hope the Government will take the matter up seriously. As far as the constituency that I have the honour to represent is concerned, I have pointed out before that I endeavoured to win the seat on broad political principles. I never made use of parish pump promises at all. It is not because I do not realise that there are many matters that require attention in that electorate. There are not only matters that require attention but many things which have been promised us by Ministers particularly by the Minister for Mines, and no attempt has been made to carry them out. A deputation was appointed at Maylands the other day for the purpose of bringing the matter under the notice of the Minister for Railways. He is hard to find at present, and after the Menzies election it is extremely doubtful whether it will be any easier to find him. Some move should be made by the present Government to appoint a new one. When he is appointed I can assure him I will have a good deal to bring along of the parish pump variety although I will not follow his example and make use of those promises for catching votes. One matter to which I would like to refer is that the Minister promised the people of Bayswater that a subway would be constructed at the west end of the station. This is very necessary at present. The whole of the business places are on one side of the railway and the railway siding is on the other, and to get to a point directly opposite where goods are landed it is necessary to go round about a mile. It is not only the private people who are affected but also the roads board who have a gigantic work ahead of them in the construction of roads and who do not receive that assistance from the Government that should be given them. Mr. Gregory promised that this subway would be constructed after June. This is just the

sort of promise that I would expect from the Minister for Mines. It is a safe promise anyhow, because he did not say what June or how long after June or whether it would be June ten years hence or June twenty years hence. Again, an overhead bridge has been promised between there and Maylands. This is not a very big matter. Whilst the subway would cost a large amount, the bridge could be constructed I believe for about £300, but no attempt has been made to carry out the work. Works of that description would very largely assist the district and would enable the Government to provide employment for a number of the unemployed who are married and have families dependent on them and who are unable to go out of the City for work. I can assure hon. members that while these works are neglected, the hon. member for Canning will find a pretty solid opponent in me for the Belmont-Burswood railway proposition, as well as the suggested line from Fremantle to Burswood via the South side of the river. As far as I am concerned I will be all out against such propositions until justice is done to the people of North Perth who I consider have been greatly neglected in the past. In Maylands also, we have what is practically a main road leading from Perth to Guildford, and one place where the only crossing at the railway line exists, we find it blocked up by what was at one time Mephan Ferguson's pipe works. As far as I can see the amount of money required for compensation prevents the Ministry from opening the road through that place. These are matters which are of importance to the district and are easier to carry out than such propositions as the railway from Fremantle to Burswood by way of the South side of the river. I have heard some hon. members dealing with the question of the refusal of unions to fall in with the awards of the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Bath: Not of the Arbitration Court but awards of a special arbitrator.

Mr. SWAN: I think it was dealt with generally as well. The hon. member for York took the unions to task for refus-

ing to abide by the Arbitration Court awards. The man in the street opposed to the principles of the Labour party will tell you that the Arbitration Act is the work of the Labour party. I do not agree with that at all. I believe that if the Labour party were represented in this House by sufficient numbers to place upon the statute book an Arbitration Act there would be no question of the unions failing to abide by the awards, because then the Act would be administered by men who would be in sympathy with the Act that would be on the statute book. That position does not exist at present. I consider the attack from the hon. member for York upon the members of this side and upon unions outside was quite as unjustifiable as it was weak. The hon. member for York also mentioned it was easier for Opposition members to approach Ministers than it was for members on the Government side. In that regard I do not agree with him at all. As far as I am concerned my experience has been a short one but I have been disappointed on other occasions when I have had appointments with Ministers. I know that I am suffering from the disadvantage of being a new member and not knowing the ropes, but I think it is possible that members will find me very persistent in the future when I know a little more, as to how to get at them, I do not wish to detain hon. members any further. I had not intended to speak but the remarks of the hon. members whose names I have mentioned made me feel it was necessary for me, even though I am a new member in the House, to rise to my feet and say a word or two in reply.

Mr. HOPKINS (Beverley) : Some time has elapsed since I had the opportunity of speaking within the precincts of this Chamber. Need I at the outset say it has afforded me infinite pleasure to renew those associations and to awaken those friendships that have always existed with hon. members on each side of the House. It has been pleasing to attend the opening of Parliament and hear the battle cries and the war whoops of

my friends opposite, more particularly my old friend the member for Mt. Margaret. Of him it might be said "Age has not withered nor custom staled the infinite variety" of his observations. I must say this appeared to me the most dismal opening of a new Parliament within my recollection. From the opening of the debate on the Address-in-Reply it was only necessary to look at the public gallery to see the lack of interest that has been taken in regard to various matters which Parliament is considering. This recalls to my mind Disraeli's views when he expressed the opinion that when the time came that the man in the street would have a vote for Parliament and would ultimately have the opportunity of being elected to that Chamber, the prestige of the institution might suffer. I am wondering to-day whether the position as we view it in this State is in accordance with the foresight of that distinguished statesman, or whether it is in a measure due to the difficulties of the Federal union; or on the other hand, perhaps, whether it is due in a measure to a practice too often indulged in by the public and sometimes even by members of Parliament, of making what might be termed sneering reference to the Parliament, which after all has been created by the people of the country. For my own part I think, situated as this State is, a national or federal influence is not likely to be a large consideration for many years to come. Situated as we are a huge distance from what will probably be for all time the seat of the Federal Government, it must necessarily follow that either the Parliament itself, its legislation or the reports of the papers circulating in close proximity thereto, cannot exercise that influence over the Parliament of this State that it will over the people of the Eastern and more thickly populated portions of Australia. I am not exactly satisfied with the achievements of the Federal Parliament which I, along with other young Australians, did my small share towards creating. I do not think for example it is creditable to see what we saw recently, a combination existing between liberals, and what I might

term ultra-radicals—the liberals and the Labour party. The utmost of good fellowship seems to prevail between those parties. One holds office for a period and the other says, "You have had a fair go, make room for us," and with the greatest of graciousness the Prime Minister says, "Certainly gentlemen, we move out, will you kindly step in?" It reminds one of the game of cricket where you find the bowling bad and the batting extra good. It seems that the Opposition, which in my opinion in the past has been composed chiefly of conservatives of the various Parliaments of Australia, has been doing all the scouting. Mr. Deakin has had his innings, and his followers, the Labour party, are taking up the batting, and it only remains to be seen how they will score. The growth of Federal influence in the other States that has already taken place, and the many national projects that have been forecasted by the recent Administration whose policy I understand will practically be taken up by the Labour party if they remain in power, indicate clearly to us in the light of experience that we shall receive very little consideration at the hands of the Federal authorities. And when it comes to dealing with the revenue from customs and excise, which with the expiry of the Braddon Clause will pass in 1910 to the Federal authorities, I am not too sanguine that a settlement will be made which will be altogether satisfactory either to the Parliament or the people of this country, for the obvious reason that the people in the Eastern States no doubt find that the aspirations of the Federal Parliament are growing more in touch with what is their desire, and very often in the State House the reverse would seem to be the case. And in the circumstances I feel that while this session must of necessity be brief—as I hope it will—because with the advance of summer I do not think it is desirable that Parliament should sit after Christmas and would prefer to see the session held in winter if possible—when the time arrives this Parliament will be forced to put up the fight of its life in opposition to the policy that will be submitted on the financial question by the Federal authorities. Of that I feel

morally certain. Then if the Federal authorities gain the point, which in all probability they will, this House would be in a position to deal with the situation and would not have to turn to and take it into consideration. When the time arrives, we should be in a position to meet the different circumstances which of necessity will arise, and it was with that object in view that I gave notice of a question to-day. I put it in the form of a question because I did not wish to delay the House with moving a motion at a later period knowing time is so valuable. But I believe that we should in the next session of Parliament review the whole of the sources from which our State revenue is gained, and the incidence of our State taxation, in order that if the Federal Parliament do not meet us in a manner that will be satisfactory to the State we will be able to seize the alternative and apply remedial measures at the earliest possible opportunity. When speaking in the country as a candidate for Parliament I expressed the opinion that the land tax was not a desirable innovation for a country the size of Western Australia, that has practically in comparison to its size done absolutely nothing towards filling up its empty spaces or settling its vacant lands. In the report of the Lands Department hon. members will see a map showing the land available for selection in the South-Western Division, and after all one begins to wonder, if not now, when is the proper time to deal with the possibilities of the balance of this great State. Dealing with the question of the land tax, Parliament went to work in precisely the opposite direction to that usually followed by local governing bodies. For example, whoever heard of a city council or a municipality or a roads board striking a rate to-day and three months later making a valuation on which to apply the rate? That is precisely what took place in this case. Parliament authorised the striking of a rate and the rate was fixed, and then we called upon 50,000 people to furnish about 50,000 different returns, each prepared on a different basis, it necessarily meaning that no two of them could be scientific or

uniform. Members will probably recall the fact that in the Eastern States, more particularly in New Zealand, they have a tax on the unimproved values of land, but in no circumstances can that tax be applied until the valuation of the properties has first been made. Would it not have been more satisfactory if Parliament had followed out the same method here, made the valuation first and then applied the rate, or let the local governing body apply it ? Then every person would have known intelligently the amount of taxation he was called upon to bear. I have always been in favour of the imposition of taxation on the unimproved value of large estates lying idle and unoccupied, many of them in close proximity to our railway lines. We know that this State in common with the rest of Australia has expended large sums of money from revenue and from loans to build railways and to provide posts and telegraphs and other facilities for the transaction of public business, but we find to-day in this State and in other States that these railways and public facilities are not fully availed of for the simple reason that the holders of these estates allow them to lie idle and unoccupied, altogether contrary to what we believe to be the policy required for the due development of the State. It is to the owners of this land I have it in mind to apply the tax, and in a heavier degree than it is applied to-day.

Mr. Angwin : You would not have got it through.

Mr. HOPKINS : No man ever died from trying.

Mr. Angwin : We tried to do it here.

Hon. F. H. Piesse : No.

Mr. HOPKINS : There is too little sympathy shown to the man endeavouring to open the back country, whether in the mining or the agricultural world ; and I think every concession and sympathy should be extended to him ; but as matter of fact, my friends on the Opposition side of the House were not only satisfied to impose taxation on him, but I even heard one member go so far as to say that we should take away the facility for postal voting. Do hon. members realise the case of a man living 40, 50, or 100 miles back in the interior, and that the facility

to exercise his vote by post in one of the greatest concessions which the Electoral Act confers on him to-day ? As a matter of fact, I believe it is the desire of all members, when the question is seriously considered, to say, if Parliament is to be a reflex of the people, that every person should have the right to vote and that every person should exercise the right ; and I would go further and say that every person, being first given the facility, should at least be compelled to exercise that right, or in the alternative pay a penalty. There are some people who have never done deerying the authority under which they live, the Parliament by which they are governed, yet on election day even distinguished people, highly educated people living within half a mile of the Perth Town Hall, will intimate, "No ; unless a motor car is sent I will not go to the poll."

Mr. Gordon : Would you impose a penalty on the man 50 miles out ?

Mr. HOPKINS : I should give him every facility to vote, and then if he does not vote enforce the penalty ; but my experience is that the man in the back blocks will sacrifice a day, perhaps two or three, or half a dozen days, to hear a candidate speak in order that he may make a reasonable choice. We find it different in Perth, and I would like to see a penalty imposed on persons who will not exercise their right to vote to make some recompense to the State for the expense incurred in elections. Dealing with land settlement, members are aware that Queensland is doing more than this State in regard to settling its vacant lands. Is it not a remarkable performance that in the areas and latitude North of the capital of Queensland the largest settlement is taking place ? And one begins to wonder why no effort is made to survey, classify or deal intelligently with the huge area of rich country that lies North from here, in fact as far North as Wyndham. No doubt members are aware, and I think the members for Gascoyne and Kimberley and other electorates in that direction will bear me out when I say, that there is more rich land available for settlement to the North of Perth to the extent of millions of acres than there is to the South of the

capital. An hon. member says that a lot of it is bad country. True, but a lot of the country is not too good in the South, though no doubt we have in the South some very fine wheat land in almost unlimited areas. I venture to say that if a man turned out 100 head of dairy cattle or shorthorns in the far North and went back to muster them in five years time, he would muster a herd of which any man would be proud. If he turned the same herd out in the South-West—

Mr. Heitmann : They would be stolen.

Mr. HOPKINS : Probably, but they would not have the opportunity of going far before they would be poisoned. I was dealing with the subject at Bally Bally to the East of Beverley, when *Mr. Kilpatrick*, who has been a resident of Roebourne, said to me after the meeting, "From the observations you have passed in all probability you might have known something. We were reared among cattle, and when we came from Roebourne here we turned out 80 head in the country where we are now living, but at the end of twelve months when we mustered all but three of the cows were dead." That is the difference between a herd of cattle turned out in the North and a herd of cattle turned out in the South-West, yet a settler down here pays £25 per 1,000 acres, while in the North a squatter pays 5s. per 1,000 acres. There is a disparity in these figures which calls for the serious attention of Parliament. With my limited knowledge of the Northern areas I will not go so far as to say that in every case the rents are too low in the far North, but our system of land settlement in the South-West has been entirely wrong.

Hon. F. H. Piesse : For the £25 per 1,000 acres a man acquires the title, while for 5s. per 1,000 acres the squatter has only a leasehold.

Mr. HOPKINS : In the light of the experience of the rich States of New South Wales and Queensland, settlement in those States was prosperous where people were allowed to acquire the leasehold, but where the squatters endeavoured to take up freeholds they encountered bankruptcy and almost annihilation. If the people in the Northern areas spent

the little capital they had in taking up freeholds they would not have fared so well. But the settler in the South-West is absolutely compelled to take up the freehold, because there is no provision under which he can take up a perpetual lease if he desires it. I believe that in the early stages of settlement, probably for 10 years, it would be a better course to have the settler pay a nominal consideration, and later on when he has strengthened his position and requires a maturing freehold, he would be in a better position to acquire it.

Mr. Gordon : They are giving 40 years' terms in Victoria now.

Mr. HOPKINS : Probably in 2,000 acres of ordinary country in the South-West which a man is required to take up on maturing freehold, there may be a fair share of good soil, a share of gravel, a share of poison, and a percentage of wild dog, and all the other disabilities a man encounters immediately he enters on land with the idea of pioneering it.

(*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*)

Mr. HOPKINS : I was directing attention to the fact that a rental of from 5s. to 10s. per thousand acres is charged for country in the North-West and the far North and that a disparity exists between it and the rental charged on conditional purchases in the South-West. I would like to be clear on this point. I do not for one moment say that leases in the South-West are undervalued at the rentals named, but when the time arrives for this State to regulate its financial equilibrium, it may be necessary to take into consideration the ultimate settlement of the far North and the North-West and if so it may mean a considerable amount of discussion by Parliament. Although we realise that the pastoral leases will not fall in for some years, I think something over 20 years in most instances, it would be a matter for negotiation as between the Government and the pastoral lessees whereby a great deal of country held by them to-day as pastoral leases would no doubt be surrendered to the Crown if a satisfactory *quid pro quo* were arranged for. I do not blame the Gov-

ernment in the slightest in regard to the rental of £25 per thousand acres in the South-West. They are called upon to administer the Act precisely as they find it, and I as a former Minister may be equally to blame with them, or with any other Minister, for not perhaps having introduced the innovation which I am championing to-day. When I held that position however. I was there as one totally inexperienced as far as the actual working of Western Australian lands is concerned; to-day I occupy a somewhat different position, and in the light of my own personal experience my observations during this debate have been directed. I have seen instances, which I could quote, where people have had loans from the Agricultural Bank to carry out specific improvements and where the money has no sooner been paid over than it has been handed back to the Government through the avenues of the Lands Department. In many instances we find cases cropping up where settlers find it difficult to meet the half-yearly rentals falling due. As a result an extension of time is asked for. It is dealt with by the Minister and in due course is usually granted; although almost immediately prior to the time when I was Minister there was an instance where a woman had been in possession of property had established there her home and had paid her rents for years, she got behind in her rent for the 400-acre block and her property was forfeited without another word. When the papers came before me I expressed the opinion to the Under Secretary for Lands that I thought it was the most cruel, the most astonishing, piece of administration that had ever come under my notice. I wish to direct the attention of the House to the different methods adopted in Victoria. There settlers were very often permitted to have their rents accumulate up to a period of 15 years and only within the last month the present Premier of Victoria announced that the Government intended to give a respite with regard to rent of five years, and that no interest would be charged. In this State interest is charged the moment the rent

is due. I do not take so much exception to that, but it would be very much better to treat the conditional purchase selector as a squatter, giving him a lease of his property at a low rental and have the rentals assessed by a board of capable valuers. I do not mean to say we should turn the South-West into sheep runs, but I would say to the selector of 2,000 acres, who has to pay a rental of £50 a year, that if it were inconvenient and would hamper his operations to pay that sum forthwith, he would be allowed to pay 5 per cent. of the annual rental, and that on filling in a prescribed form and handing it in at the office with £2 10s., his case would be dealt with without reference to the Minister. The Crown would lose nothing for they would keep the title until the rents were paid. Take the case of a man who enters into possession of 1,000 acres of waste Crown lands. Under the existing conditions he is fortunate to get a return inside of two, three, or five years without getting assistance from the Agricultural Bank. To obtain that assistance means creating a mortgage, and that is the sort of thing that sticks to a man even more closely than his relatives. It is the only thing a man has trouble in getting rid of; it is generally with him until he parts with his property. It would be better to assist the settler in the way I have indicated. I do not think when the question of amending the Land Act comes before this House the views I have expressed will find violent opposition from either side. A great deal could be done in the direction indicated to ameliorate the condition of many people who are in possession of the waste lands of the Crown, and who are men of limited capital. I know a man who came here and wanted land in the South-West, but when he found he had to acquire a title, which was in reality a maturing freehold, he said he had not the means, and that the little money he possessed he wished to use in the purchase of plant, horses, cattle, and sheep, and that unless other arrangements could be made he would go back to Queensland. He returned to that State, and that is one instance which

came to my own knowledge of the State losing a settler; whereas under different conditions of tenure he would no doubt have remained here. As exemplifying the advance made in land settlement here one has only to recall an instance that came under my notice when Minister for Lands. I saw an old cutting from a *Government Gazette* of the year 1839. The land revenue of the State for the quarter appeared under the heading of "casual" and amounted to £7 13s. 9d. Last year the land revenue amounted to £262,245. Deducting the cost of running the department, the net return to revenue was over £150,000, equal to 3 per cent on a loan of £5,000,000. The most gratifying feature of that revenue is the fact that it is a recurring item and will probably remain on the books of the department in most cases for the next 20 years. I regretted to notice when reading the report of the Under Secretary for Lands that no reference was made to the question of decentralisation. In the course of the report the Under Secretary states that there are over 38,000 holdings current and in the files and books of the department. I have only to submit the question to members that there are over 38,000 holdings on the books of the department, the whole of which are centred in the city of Perth, to give ample evidence of the delay which must of necessity take place. I remember when I was in the department I had occasion to call at the little railway station of Mount Barker, and while there I intercepted a stock inspector, a conditional purchase inspector, a distrier surveyor, an inspecting surveyor, an insect pests inspector, a local land agent and an inspector of the Agricultural Bank. That was the first glaring evidence that came before my notice of the prime advantages that would accrue by a method of decentralisation. The State to my way of thinking should be cut into districts and I know the Premier, who is also Minister for Lands, is at any rate desirous of giving effect to that policy. He has, I believe, already appointed two Commissioners for the purpose of dividing the State into land districts at the earliest possible date.

We know that the present Minister has done probably more for agricultural development and for the settlement of our lands than any Minister who has preceded him. It all very well for a man to be a Minister and chock full of good ideas, but if the rest of the Cabinet think differently it is not much use; whereas, if that Minister is the Premier he has only to be satisfied with the merits of the reforms he proposes to initiate, and members of the Cabinet will always naturally support him as knowing more about the department he personally controls. There was an instance that came under my notice a while ago, and I do not at the moment know whether the difficulty that arose then was due to the Act itself, or to the methods of administration. I am sorry the Premier is not here to-night, because he would no doubt have been able to assure me on the point.

Mr. Taylor : He is just preparing himself for a big speech at 8 o'clock.

Mr. HOPKINS : As hon. members know, at various periods, second and third class lands have been withdrawn from selection, and during those periods if a person desired to select a block of land he was necessarily compelled, irrespective of the quality of the land, to take it under first class conditions. In the instance I am going to relate a settler acquired his holding at one of these periods. But after he had improved it, put a fence round it, erected a home on it, and put in a crop he asked the department if they would favour him with a reclassification. They said, "Yes," if he would pay the fee. He paid the fee, and the land was found to be worth only 5s. or 6s. per acre. He said, "Well now will you please re-assess my land." They said, "We cannot do that, you have fenced it certainly, cleared it, put your home on it and put in a crop, but if you wish to have it re-assessed you must relinquish all title to it and take your chance of getting it again before the Lands Board."

Mr. Hudson : I have heard of similar cases.

Mr. HOPKINS : I am not quite sure but that with the limited funds at our dis-

posal and in our hurry to provide for new selectors we have not, in some instances, overlooked the men already on the land. I cannot conceive the merits of the argument that authorises or justifies the construction of a railway for some person who is going to settle on the land when you find people 45 miles from railway communication. I know of a man who this year is taking off his 45th crop and he is still 45 miles from a railway. He is out beyond Marradong. My friend, Mr. Cowcher, was born there, and, needless to say, was there before a railway. Still there is no railway there.

Mr. Taylor : He has never said anything about the necessity for it.

Mr. HOPKINS : Possibly, like my friend the member for Mt. Margaret, he has so many wants in his own district that he has not the time to think about other portions of the State. A few months ago mutton was scarce in Perth and was commanding a higher price than it had ever before realised. In this particular tract of country there were a thousand fat sheep offering, not one of which could be placed on this market owing on the one hand to the absence of a railway, and on the other to the prevalence of poison on our highways. Yet to-day we have men at work putting a stock route through to Kimberley. We have huge mobs of stock travelling down the coast-line to Perth and Fremantle. When they reach Mingenew, where the English company's railway starts, they strike poison and the whole of the cattle and sheep have to be entrained and brought over the company's line to Perth and Fremantle. The same things exist with regard to every road that approaches Perth with the exception of perhaps two, including the road that runs down the coast to Rockingham.

Mr. Butcher : Poison exists on the coast road also, but to a lesser extent.

Mr. HOPKINS : That is so. Perth is the only capital City in the Commonwealth that is able to make the boast that live stock cannot come by road except from two directions because of the prevalence of poison on our highways

and stock routes. One of the great difficulties people in the South-West have had to contend against is the fact that although they have eradicated the poison on their own properties their stock has to take the risk of being poisoned on the road. There is another matter in respect to which I would like to crave the indulgence of hon. members while I direct your attention to it : that is in regard to mining areas. I have here the returns from six of the largest gold-producing mines in this country. The mining leases of these properties should, under ordinary circumstances, fall in to the Crown after 21 years. Settlement began on the Golden Mile in 1893, so, six years from now, or some time prior to that date, Parliament will be called upon to consider under what terms and conditions it is prepared to renew those mining leases. It is true the Mining Act to-day makes provision for the renewal of these leases subject only to the Act and regulations which at that time may be in force. So that if this House desires to get anything like an equitable return in the next period from these mining properties it will be necessary to deal with them at such time as the leases revert to the Crown.

Mr. Johnson : If only Mr. Gregory had done what he was asked to do we would have it fixed up already.

Mr. HOPKINS : My friend the member for Guildford was at one time Minister for Mines, and if at that time any one of these companies had chosen to make a most infinitesimal amendment to its boundaries they could have gone to the department, surrendered the original lease and got a 21 years amendment. That has been the policy of the Mines Department through successive Ministers.

Mr. Johnson : Yes ; but who fought the question when it was before the House?

Mr. HOPKINS : I am not dealing with that. We are confronted with the possibility that the time may be at hand when the finances of the country will be in very straitened circumstances, and when that time arrives it will be for

the House to consider whether they will consent to the renewal of these mining leases. What do we find? The Golden Horseshoe has produced 1,534,812 ounces of gold, or gold to the value of about six millions, and they have paid in rental £1,524 14s. I can just imagine that, if I held under lease from the British investor a huge mineral area in some portion of England for which I had paid in rent £1,524 14s. and extracted minerals to the value of six million pounds, every person who had an interest in the land would be chasing me at the expiry of my lease in an endeavour to persuade me to renew it. Now I come to the question of the Great Boulder. This company produced to the extent of 1,422,679 ounces and has paid in rent £1,478 6s. The mine has produced about six million pounds worth of gold. The Ivanhoe has produced 1,201,720 ounces and has paid an annual rental of £1,084. The Oroya has produced gold to the extent of 1,067,411 ounces and paid a rental of £1,997. The Perseverance has produced gold to the extent of 1,042,568 ounces and paid a rental of £366, while the Lake View Consols has produced gold to the extent of 948,819 ounces and paid a rental of £1,067. Those are the annual rentals on the mines that have produced the gold to which I have made reference. What I want to emphasise is that when we have to review the whole of the avenues of taxation it is right that these mining companies should be borne in mind. And for my own part I think that after the expiry of the first period of 21 years the most satisfactory method of dealing with mining companies would be to charge a royalty on the gold produced. Then we will be putting no hardship on the company that cannot afford to pay, while the State, in return for the admirable services rendered, will receive something towards the cost that is menacing us in regard to the Goldfields Water Scheme. In this latter regard we had a forecast the other day from the Minister for Works, and it suggested itself to me that the Minister had perhaps been badly advised, and that not being in touch

with goldfields conditions it was quite possible that he might have made an error of judgment. I think he forecasted the possibility of an increased price to the richer mines. Well, I am doubtful whether it would be operative. It has for long been demonstrated that in the vicinity of Boulder there is a very good rainfall, and tanks and dams have been constructed and everyone of these mines has an unlimited supply of salt water in its lower depths. When Mr. Gardiner, who was then Treasurer, made this arrangement with the mining companies for the supply of scheme water, it was arranged that they should not use their salt water, and on this the price at which the scheme water would be delivered was accordingly fixed. I contemplate therefore that in the event of an increased price these mines would prefer to use salt water already at their disposal. I do not like to take upon myself as a new member the task of administering a lecture to old members of the Assembly like my friend the member for Mt. Margaret; but really I thought it was a little bit over the odds when I heard hon. members on the other side of the House speaking in the ungenerous terms in which they did in regard to my old friend and one time colleague, Mr. Gregory. Personally I would scorn to believe that that gentleman had done one-tenth of the things that was charged against him. And when we realise that he is not at the moment a member of this Assembly and may not have the opportunity of replying within the walls of this Chamber to the statements made, one is almost inclined to ask whether the age of chivalry has entirely departed. I can make due allowance for the sympathy that people feel towards their relatives, and I can excuse under those circumstances a deal of play; but really I am at a loss to understand how hon. members on that side could hold themselves justified in reading and re-reading the composition in prose of their dear old uncle Mr. Krug. The question of the various licensing proposals that have been placed before the country seems to have been absorbed entirely by two opposing

forces, the W.C.T.U. on the one side and the hotelkeepers on the other, and in the midst of the whole of the turmoil surrounding the question the interests of the State, almost on every occasion, have been submerged and almost forgotten. We know instances of back country hotels which to-day, owing to the mandatory conditions of the Licensing Act, are over-assessed. I know of a hotel in Wellington Street which very recently was placed in the market, tenders were invited for the hotel; a very shrewd man at that time had been in occupation of the house for two or three years. For a ten years' lease he offered £7,000, £25 weekly rental and £2,000 to be spent in improvements; another person tendered at £10,000 ingoing, £25 weekly rental and to make improvements worth £2,500; that tender was accepted. I do not like to make use of private information, but the rental was £25, a ten years' lease, £10,000 ingoing, and to effect improvements to the value of £2,500, which to my way of thinking was more than the existing building was worth. With the probabilities before this Parliament I think the requirement of the country is a licensing assessment board, and then every license would be assessed on its merits. Personally I have no sympathy with the policy that will impose a tax on a man who is delving in the back country, and half the time living on kangaroo and damper, while the lords of the hotels lord it in their motor cars through King's Park every afternoon. There are concessions which in the past have been given absolutely to the trade. I want to be clear when I mention licensing fees, mining leases or any other source of revenue. I am asking that these matters shall be placed on their merits and determined by a board capable of assessing reasonably their proper value. I do not think as a result of past legislation we should be guided by these things; when the time comes to readjust the taxation of the country I hope the views of experts as to these three items will be taken into consideration. The office of the Agent General is one, to my way of thinking, which has always

had a demoralising influence on the politicians of Australia. It is not peculiar to this State. One begins to wonder. In Victoria people are exhibiting some feeling of resentment because they are called on still to pay £1,000 annually to the Agent General in London. They have a huge export trade and one would imagine that they, at any rate, would be glad to have an Agent General, but the opinion has become firmly established there whether it would not be more satisfactory to have the Commonwealth establish their High Commissioner, and enable the Agent General for Victoria to be called back. After all, the firms who do trade in England have their own representatives, in whom they place more confidence and trust than in the average Agent General, who, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred knows very little of the exports of the country. They pay £1,000 in Victoria. This country with an export trade in pearls does not require a man in London to sell them; and an export trade in gold—I do not suppose the exporters would care to have it handled by the Agent General. As a matter of fact, we have an export trade principally in items which can be influenced to a small extent by the Agent General, yet the State, because of some foolish contract entered into in the dark ages with a one-time Governor feels constrained to pay £500 a year more than the people of Victoria are called upon to pay. I am as loyal myself as any other Australian, as any other descendant from English parents, but at the same time I feel, with the advent of Federation, and with the increased expenditure which is daily taking place and the disabilities with which this State has been confronted, I feel the time has arrived when a Governor General is adequate for the requirements of Australia. And I wish in expressing my views in regard to the question to have it clearly understood that I have the very highest respect and esteem for His Excellency the present Governor of this State: indeed it makes my views hard to drive home under the circumstances having a Governor here who has proved himself so exceedingly

popular. At the same time there has been some trouble in South Australia. The local Parliament there expressed the opinion that another appointment should not be made, but personally I take it that the idea that the people of South Australia had, and the Parliament had, was to have appointed a Lieutenant-Governor, and I thought at the time when they made that recommendation if they had asked the Colonial Office to give consideration to the names perhaps of some four or five distinguished Australians it would have strengthened their case considerably. And I would ask the old settlers of this country what kind of a thrill of appreciation would have gone through them if Mr. Price, the Premier of South Australia, had recommended Sir John Forrest as Lieutenant-Governor of that State. When I was a member of a Government we had an opportunity of making appointments and elevating persons to the bench, and I have often regretted that we were not guilty of a most unfederal act because we imported Judges from England. For them I have the highest respect and for all the Judges and always will, at the same time there were men to my way of thinking capable—I do not wish to make comparisons as to the persons—but there were men capable of interpreting the laws of this country to be had from the Eastern parts of the Commonwealth, and to my way of thinking it would have been a graceful and a Federal act if in this outpost of the Australian Commonwealth we had seized that opportunity of bringing under the notice of those interested in the development of Federation the addition to our judicial bench being made from the Eastern parts of Australia. Hon. members had a deal of discussion on the hustings in regard to the question of freezing works at Wyndham. The pastoral industry and the agricultural industry of New Zealand, of Victoria, of New South Wales, and of Queensland was almost on the verge of bankruptcy and annihilation, when by the introduction of freezers a bright prospect was brought to the whole country, even from the smallest farmer to the

biggest squatter. To-day I attended a sale of stock from the Eastern districts—there were some three firms represented—but not a solitary hoof offered was sold. Why is this? Fat lambs were offered by the auctioneer. "Will anyone start them at 2s.?" This is due to the fact that this country produces a great supply now of mutton and lambs in prime condition and they all come on the market at one and the same period. The only way and the only time when cheap mutton is available to the people of the metropolitan area and the Eastern Goldfields is when the mutton is produced by the local growers, within reasonable transit of the goldfields area and the metropolitan area, and to handle that stuff it is necessary, in the flush of the season, that it shall be slaughtered and frozen. It is a remarkable thing, but the epicures of the age are satisfied to travel home by the English, German and French mail boats and eat frozen mutton and beef all the time. I would introduce freezers as portion of the national development of every port where trade is offered. There is no use denying or closing our eyes to the fact that the city of Perth is deeply interested in the growth of the Kimberleys and the Victoria district as much as in the country surrounding Esperance and Albany. On every occasion I shall do my utmost to establish freezing works at each port. A good deal has been said by members as to the contract drawn up between the pastoralists of Kimberley and the Government: it was said to be a one-sided arrangement and nothing but disaster would follow in its wake. As a matter of fact, an unprejudiced person could only come to one conclusion on reading the document, that is that no financial institution in the world would touch it while the Government contribute half the funds and exercise the full control. I have not the exact figures by me, but I think we have one million head of cattle and three million head of sheep in this country; I am taking the figures from the *Commonwealth Year Book for 1906*, there being no book issued since then, and in that *Year Book* those

are the figures given. The population of this State is 270,000 persons, one-third probably are not beef-eaters at all. What are we going to do with the excess of production? It is going to be boiled down for tallow? There is only one solution of the difficulty with which the country is confronted, and that is by the erection of freezing works at every possible place. I have here a list of some of the freezing works in New Zealand. In regard to Canterbury freezing works, shares are paid up to £7 10s.; they are paying dividends of 7 per cent., and the shares on the market in the open exchanges are selling at £7 10s. Christchurch—the shares are paid up to £10, the dividend being paid is 8 per cent. and the shares are being sold at £10. In the Gear Meat Works at Wellington the shares that are paid up to £1 are selling at £2 9s. 6d., those paid up to £4 are selling at £8 16s., and they are paying 10 per cent. The Wellington Meat and Export Company shares are paid up to £5, they are selling at £8 7s. 6d. and are paying 8 per cent.; Wanganui—the shares are paid up to £5, they are being sold at £5, and they are paying 8 per cent. dividends. I find my address has taken up much more time than I intended, but at the same time I felt that when I worked these figures out they ought to be brought under the notice of members. After all, if the pastoralists and the farmers take the question up seriously and are prepared to put their names on a joint and several there will be no difficulty in raising the money to construct any of these refrigerating works through the banks in Perth, but if on the other hand these people are not prepared to accept that responsibility the alternative is easy, that Parliament shall take into consideration at an early date the ways and means whereby freezing chambers can be established at every port where we can assist the development of our internal and export trade. Reference has been made to the class of immigrants coming to the country. Personally I am not enamoured of the methods of the Immigration Department, if it is one; but when I remember that the whole policy of immigration was in-

itiated by my friends opposite I am inclined to wonder what the result has been. Personally, I have carefully perused the Eastern papers on all occasions. You see frequently that for a few blocks of land—eight or ten perhaps are offered in the interior of Victoria and New South Wales—there will be 50 applicants as a rule for the one block, and of this number in almost every instance 90 per cent. are disappointed. I would not give one of these people as a new settler for the best ten Englishmen who come here in their inexperienced condition. There are a large number of farmers sons who are only awaiting the chance to come here or to go to any other country that can offer inducements such as those that we are offering. The problem that confronts the State to-day is how we can settle the vacant lands, how to populate them, not by threes or fives or tens, but in a wholesale manner instead of in a retail way as we are doing to-day. And to do that successfully I would infinitely prefer to offer greater inducements to the men who from their very birth have been educated to and accustomed to work in dry areas. I would not consent to bringing English people here, inexperienced men as they all are, and sending them out 30 miles from a railway to subdue the bush, to enter into a class of occupation with which they are not familiar. Many of these people have never swung an axe in their lives until they came to Western Australia. It is economical to put such men on to do such work in a month which an Australian could do in a few days? I will confess this, that in every portion of Australia I am struck with admiration of the fortitude of the rising generation of Australia, and this is more marked the further back one goes. Give me the man who can start at daybreak and do his 70 miles on horseback and then at the end of the journey cover another 20 miles on foot. How many Englishmen would be prepared to take on such a contract? Not many of them, or certainly not until they had served three or four or five years of apprenticeship. Australians have subdued the interior of the various States. They have done it in many cases as a

matter of necessity and they have carried on the development of the State to the condition in which we find it to-day. I would like to see an authorisation from Parliament to raise three millions sterling for the purpose of building necessary agricultural railways, classifying and subduing the whole of the vacant areas suitable for settlement, and I would not want it limited to the South-West. I would like to see every portion of the State dealt with fairly and to give the same opportunities for settlement wherever the country invites it. If we were to follow out those methods, we would absorb the surplus population of the Eastern States. If a couple of pages of, say, the *Australasian* and the *Bulletin* were devoted to advertising that we had 2,000 blocks of land each of 1,000 or 2,000 acres in extent to offer to approved settlers to whom assistance would be given from the Agricultural Bank to the extent of £500, or £1,000, will anyone tell me if I went to the East armed with such a proposal that I could not dispose of the whole of these blocks in twenty-four hours? We have such possibilities, and yet we are satisfied to let them go quietly by.

Mr. Angwin : We are settling a good number already in the State.

Mr. HOPKINS : It is one thing to settle the people on the land ; it is another thing to settle them successfully. If the country cannot settle them successfully it will gain nothing by it. It would be like putting Mr. Gordon on to-day and putting him off to put Mr. Walker on next year. I want to be clear in regard to what I have said. I do not wish to see any section of the community penalised at the expense of another. I do hold that the people who are settling on the land in the South-West Division are not getting a fair deal in comparison with the licensees of the hotels or the lessees of mines on the Golden Mile, and in comparison with various other industries to which I might make comparison.

Mr. Johnson : Take proprietary race clubs for instance.

Mr. HOPKINS : Proprietary race clubs are institutions which we could do very well without. I have to thank hon.

members for the patient and kind hearing given me, almost a stranger, and I hope if I have wearied members, perhaps something I have mentioned may give reason for discussion at a later period.

Question put and passed ; the Address adopted.

House adjourned at 8.23 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 20th November, 1908.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

BILL—SUPPLY. £365,579.

Appropriation Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with this Bill.

Ordered that the Message be printed and taken into consideration on the next sitting day.