

# Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 28th June, 1906.

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

## PRAYERS.

### PETITION—RAILWAY PROJECTS, SOUTH-WEST.

MR. DAGLISH (Subiaco) presented a petition, praying the House to take into consideration the early construction of the Albany to Bridgetown, Kojoonup to Bridgetown, and Greenhills to Broome Hill loop G.S.R. proposed railways.

Petition read.

### QUESTION—POLICE LAUNCH CYGNET.

MR. HOLMAN asked the Premier: 1, Has the police launch "Cygnet" been fitted with an oil-engine? 2, If so, when, and at what cost? 3, Were tenders called for the supplying of the engine? 4, If so, what prices were submitted? 5, If not, why? 6, Has the working of the engine given full satisfaction?

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, The engines are now fitted in the launch at a cost of £720. 3, No. 4, See No. 3. 5, After duly considering the capabilities of various types of oil engines it was decided, on the advice of the Government Engineer, to order a 45 h.p. Thornycroft engine, and this was done through the accredited agents, Messrs. Denny Brothers. 6, The Government Engineer reports that the engine is satisfactory.

### QUESTION—LOAN MONEYS AND WORKS.

MR. BATH asked the Premier: In view of the fact that the Agent General has issued a pamphlet in which it is stated that our loan moneys are only expended on reproductive works, has the Premier informed that gentleman that £80,000 has been expended on public buildings and roads and bridges, in order that the necessary correction may be made?

THE PREMIER replied: No; but the Agent General has been supplied

with copies of the General and Loan Estimates, which contain the information.

### QUESTION—CIRCUIT COURTS, INTENTIONS.

MR. TROY asked the Attorney General: Having regard to the utterance of the Attorney General at Kalgoorlie, to the effect that it was necessary to find work for the new Judge to be appointed—1, Is he prepared to send the new Judge on circuit? 2, If so, will he provide for the establishment of Circuit Courts in the Murchison, Geraldton, and other districts.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, The Judge to go circuit is not selected by the Attorney General, but by His Honour the Chief Justice in consultation with their Honours the Puisne Judges. It is intended to request their Honours from time to time to select a Judge to go circuit. 2, If the amount of legal business warrants such a procedure, a Circuit Court will be established at Geraldton.

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the TREASURER: Copies of Orders of the Council approved under Section 35. of "The Audit Act, 1904."

By the PREMIER: 1, Reports of proceedings before the Boards of Conciliation and the Court of Arbitration, 1901-03, 1903, 1904, and 1905. 2, Report of proceedings under "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902," for 1905. 3, Statistics of Friendly Societies for 1904. 4, Amended Regulations under "The Hospitals Act, 1894." 5, Amended Regulations under "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902." 6, Regulations under "The Fisheries Act, 1905." 7, Report by certain members of Parliament regarding routes of a railway to the Pilbarra Goldfields.

### BILLS (5)—FIRST READING.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT, introduced by the Treasurer.

MUNICIPALITIES ACT AMENDMENT, introduced by the Attorney General.

SECOND-HAND DEALERS LICENSING, introduced by the Attorney General.

STATUTE LAW OF EVIDENCE, introduced by the Attorney General.

COLLIE AND ESPEANCE MUNICIPALITIES VALIDATION, introduced by the Attorney General.

## SUPPLY BILL, £564,748.

Message from the Governor previously received, recommending the appropriation out of Consolidation Revenue and Loan Funds of the sum of £564,748 for the services of the year ending 30th June, 1907, now considered.

**THE TREASURER (Hon. F. Wilson) :** The intention was only to take the Bill through the first reading this afternoon, and to postpone the remaining stages until after the Address-in-Reply. He moved—

That the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply and also Ways and Means, for the purpose of considering the message.

Question passed.

## IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

[**MR. ILLINGWORTH** in the Chair.]

**MR. H. DAGLISH :** This action of the Treasurer was surprising; for he, when sitting in Opposition, was a great stickler for the forms of the House and a strong objector to any suspension of the Standing Orders, or to any other proceeding that would tend to prevent members from having due opportunity for discussing matters brought before the House. Frequently the Treasurer had raised his voice when Supply Bills were before us, to deprecate such action as he was now taking. Such action was perhaps warranted in previous sessions, but was quite unwarranted now; for we had not yet entered on the financial year in respect of which the proposed expenditure was to be authorised; and the Treasurer had 10 days after the 30th June instant during which he was authorised to expend the moneys allocated by the Appropriation Act passed last session. The Treasurer, though he might find it impossible to be consistent as Minister with all the views he expressed when in Opposition, should nevertheless, in view of the stage of the year, be consistent in this matter. There was no need for undue haste in granting supply; and the Committee should have a full opportunity of considering the proposals in the Bill. Let the Treasurer read his own weighty arguments chronicled in *Hansard* during previous sessions.

**THE CHAIRMAN :** The hon. member was out of order, as there was nothing before the Committee.

**THE TREASURER** moved:—

That there be granted to His Majesty the sum of £564,748, for the services of the year ending 30th June, 1907.

**MR. T. H. BATH :** There was no proposal to pass the Bill through all its stages at this sitting. The Treasurer had informed him privately that there were alternative courses. We might put through the Bill in the customary manner, which would mean that owing to the adjournment of another place the passing of the Bill into law must stand over, so that till the middle of July money would be expended without Parliamentary authorisation; while the other course was to follow the provisions of the Constitution in the Standing Orders, by putting the Bill through all its stages without undue delay. The Treasurer had promised to allow the proper time to elapse between the different stages of the Bill.

**THE TREASURER :** It was astonishing that with the experience gained by the member for Subiaco (**Mr. Daglish**) as Premier and Treasurer, he did not remember that the arguments advanced on this subject in previous years sought to show that no Government should avoidably expend money without the sanction of the House. He (the Treasurer) had on occasions opposed the suspension of Standing Orders to permit Bills of this kind being rushed through at one sitting, when he thought such a course unnecessary; but he would now endeavour as Treasurer to carry out what he knew to be the wishes of all members of the House, so that the Government might have the authority of Parliament for all money expended. This was the 28th June. On the 1st July we must of necessity spend some money without authority. True, he had 10 days in which to collect moneys due prior to the 30th June, and to pay out moneys to which we were committed prior to that date. In those 10 days not only must he meet liabilities accumulated before the end of June, and get in the revenue which might not have come to hand by the 30th June, but he had to continue to pay away money; hence he took the first opportunity of manifesting an honest endeavour to get parliamentary authority before entering on the new year. The Government did not intend

to force the Bill through the House, but merely at this sitting to have it read a first time. Any objection members might have to the Bill could be taken on the second reading. The motions to be proposed in Committee were absolutely formal, and no exception was ever taken to them. Carry the Bill to the first-reading stage, and there let it remain until the Address-in-Reply was passed, when he hoped the Bill would become law.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and report adopted.

#### IN COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS.

Formal motion made by the Treasurer.

MR. DAGLISH: Many of the remarks he had already made would have been unnecessary had the Treasurer given the Committee at an earlier stage the information he gave later when asked for by a criticism. That criticism was made without any desire to hamper the Treasurer in his actions, and he (Mr. Daglish) simply desired that the Committee should be kept posted with the views and intentions of the Treasurer in regard to the expenditure which the Committee was asked to provide for. It would be well if the Treasurer would inform the Committee for what period this supply was intended, and whether it was intended before the period expired to make the annual Financial Statement.

THE TREASURER hoped he had made it clear that this Supply Bill would not be carried beyond the first-reading stage at this sitting; at any rate, the Leader of the Opposition understood that from him.

MR. BOLTON (Cross bench): There was another party behind here, the Treasurer should remember.

THE TREASURER: The member for Subiaco would be aware that Supply Bills were passed to meet the estimated average of expenditure, and this Bill would carry on the services for two months. With regard to the Annual Estimates and the Financial Statement, the Estimates were well in hand, and he hoped to be able to obtain the necessary returns from the various departments shortly after the 10th of July, in order that the balance on the year's transactions might be made. If he could obtain from each department at an early

date a statement of the estimated expenditure for the ensuing 12 months, he would be in a position to bring down the Estimates and deliver his Financial Statement early in August. He would endeavour to deliver that statement at the earliest possible moment, because he fully appreciated that it was the right of Parliament to know at the earliest possible moment what were the requirements of the State from a financial point of view.

MR. DAGLISH: Then the Treasurer did not expect to bring down a farther request for supply before delivering his annual Financial Statement?

THE TREASURER hoped not.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

#### SUPPLY BILL INTRODUCED.

Bill introduced, read a first time, and the second reading ordered for the next sitting of the House.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### THIRD DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous day.

MR. P. J. LYNCH (Mt. Leonora): In resuming the debate on the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech, there is usually a difference of opinion as to the best mode of treating a Speech of this kind. Some members hold the opinion that in addressing ourselves to the opening Speech the time is absolutely wasted, that neither the House nor the country derive any benefit from it. I feel, however, it is absolutely necessary that some attention should be directed on an occasion of this kind to the matter contained in the Speech when opportunity is given to refer to the past, and refer also to the legislation that is proposed in the Speech we have listened to. As to the past, so far as the party on this side of the House are concerned, we have to complain that on the last occasion when discussing a Speech from His Excellency, the Leader of this party took some pains to closely criticise the policy then set forth, as well as some of the administrative acts of which the country had had experience; and the Government of the day, whether through discourtesy or not I am unable to say, allowed the

hon. member's closely reasoned criticism to go without a reply. The result was that inevitably during the debates in that session on almost every measure or motion brought up for discussion the remarks were more or less tinged with those pent-up feelings which members naturally had not found an outlet for in speaking on the Address-in-Reply. Therefore I feel that the short time which is apparently wasted at the outset of the session cannot be called wasted in the true sense, because it gives an opportunity to members to vent their feelings and supplies a safety-valve for those members who may be labouring under impressions, true or false, as to how things have been conducted in the past and how they are to be conducted in the immediate future in the legislation proposed. Let me say that I want to assure the House, and particularly members opposite, that it is my intention on this occasion to indulge in some plain speaking, to speak in the language of truth, that is the language which is usually employed by members on this (Opposition) side of the House; and in doing so it is unnecessary for me to prophesy that I shall probably tread on some of the corns of hon. members opposite. I have first to congratulate the youthful Premier on obtaining such a high position so early in his career, and I feel that, judged in the light of the way in which he has comported himself in this Chamber as a reasonable opponent in debate and as a man, he has won the distinction perhaps none too soon. Of course he has all the inexperience of youth on his side; but I am sure he will not be wanting in efforts to make up for those defects by bringing to bear—[MEMBER: As leader of the Opposition?] his best energies, in the trying time that is before the new Government. A very happy choice was made also in selecting as a colleague the youthful member for Fremantle (Hon. J. Price) to take up the Works portfolio. I believe the hon. member will do every credit to the position, and will discharge the duties efficiently. At the same time that appointment was not without a mysterious suggestion that it was made as a politic move on the part of the Premier in view of the possibilities that were to be anticipated, especially at the time the appointment was made; and in view of

the fact also that there is hardly a spot in the State that is more inclined to look on matters from a parochial standpoint than is the constituency represented by the new Minister for Works. Whatever may have been the stimulating motive of the appointment, it does appear to have been influenced entirely by politic considerations. I hope at the same time that the new Minister will have a successful career. I do not wish to pause on the manœuvring which was indulged in by Ministers and some prospective Ministers on that particular night while bivouacing on the swamps around Midland Junction. As to the generalship exercised by the Premier and the Minister for Mines on that occasion, I must say they out-manœuvred the Colonial Treasurer of the present day. The exploits of De Wet in striving to elude the vigilance of the British in South Africa were only child's play in comparison with the evolutions of Ministers on that memorable night. I hope that if ever the Japanese make a swoop on Australia or this portion of it, we shall never select the Colonial Treasurer to take charge of a regiment. I have every confidence that we should have an expert leader in Major Moore, who is Premier. I wish to assure the member for Swan (Mr. Gull), who is so much concerned about what he termed the fractious nature of the opposition we would offer on this side of the House that, as far as this party is concerned it will offer neither compound nor simple "fractions" opposition. I believe its traditions will be ample warrant that on all questions offered for the consideration of this House we will be found to give that sober, sensible, and I hope considerate expression of opinion that has been, notwithstanding our shortcomings, the main characteristic of the party on whose behalf I am speaking. Touching on the policy speech which is the subject I suppose I shall be expected to address myself to, I must say that it gives members on this side some consolation to observe that in that policy speech there is much reflected light. In other words there are items in that speech which are certainly reflected from this side of the House. Whatever progressiveness that speech includes or whatever it embraces in the nature of advanced legislation, shows a

discernable vigour sadly wanting in the speech we heard last October. It is some pleasure to know that the ship of State in Western Australia is steered partly from the Opposition. The Minister for Works laughs, but they say he laughs best who laughs last. If he recalls the policy placed before this House and the country last October, can he compare it with the policy which is now enunciated? He must necessarily conclude that the policy we are now considering embraces items which were forced into that speech through pressure exercised either in this House or in the country on behalf of the party we represent. Therefore, I am not insisting upon too much when I say it is mainly through the exertions of this party in this Chamber as well as other portions of our contingent who have been unsuccessful in the country that the speech contains those items that savour of progressiveness; and consequently I claim that those on the Government benches are living partly by reflected light, and that the rudder of the State is largely directed now and again by the Opposition. There was the very ponderous utterance by the Premier at Bunbury. In fact when one refers to it as a thing of gigantic proportions in the nature of Ministerial utterances he will say the first and last word about it. I question very much after all whether the chartering of that special train to Bunbury, with the attendant travelling and other expenses incidental to that speech, whether after all it was a very payable proposition for this State. In fact on a close analysis of that speech it seems to us on these benches that it only includes about three items which are worthy of note, and if we subtract all that surplusage of bright optimism, all that which is in the nature of a public works report, and all the calculations of a small and worthless character, there is very little left in that Bunbury utterance. And I assert that those three items that reflect the mind of the country at the present time are the three items that have been associated with the policy of this party and now find a place in the policy of our opponents on the Government benches. In fact the speech itself as delivered at Bunbury reminds me very much of what is known on the goldfields as

a huge buck reef that would go about three specks to the ton; and those specks have been stolen from this side and shot into it; and at present it appears before the country as a huge buck reef policy, "salted." However, we are not jealous of members opposite annexing those items of our policy. I think the past history of our career not only in this State but in other States of the Commonwealth, shows that our policy is mainly to see enactments effected rather than to introduce them or be jealous of those who do. We are perfectly satisfied, no matter who engages in the work, so long as the work is performed; and I think that when we apply our own experience in this State of how we acquitted ourselves on those benches, I can say we would still have been there had we a lower sense of self-respect and had we the desire to cling on with that characteristic tenacity which was so exemplified by the recent Ministry—our attitude can be understood. We are perfectly satisfied to let the policy speech include those items that have been the result of the special striving of this party in Parliament and outside of the House. Addressing myself to the Speech, I am naturally expected to give an opinion on those things which I find fault with, and to act in a business-like way it is well to begin at the beginning. It is well to trace at the outset how the country has been managed in the past, and to arrive at some conclusion on the condition of the country at present, and, if it is not in a satisfactory condition, to what is it due. In the first place we are apt to trace the bad condition of things in the country to the action of the Government, and in turn to this Parliament, that we more or less must bear a share of the blame. Seeing that we have such an imperfect system at present for giving expression to the will of the people, the first problem that the Government of the day should naturally address themselves to would be the improvement of the method that at present we find so defective as far as giving expression to the will of the people of this State is concerned. And what do we find? In the first place the other branch of the Legislature is mentioned in the Governor's Speech, and it is proposed to deal with it in a

very gingerly fashion. It is proposed very seriously in this Speech to only amend it to the extent of a £15 qualification as far as electors are concerned. The Government of the day want to be recognised as a liberal and progressive one. Some of them want to be recognised as being equivalent in point of liberality to members on this side of the House.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** We do not admit your liberality in any sense.

**MR. LYNCH:** I ask them in view of their various claims to that title of liberality to consider wherein lies their justification for the claim, when they are not going so far as the Government headed by Mr. James, who is now Agent General, went in this Chamber some two years ago. Let us remember that it was passed in this Chamber when Mr. James was Premier that the qualification for the Upper House would be reduced to £10, and in the other branch of the Legislature that was rejected. Here we have a Government coming to the front and wanting the people of Western Australia to suppose it is progressive and liberal, yet the Minister is not prepared to go as far as this portion of the Parliament went in relation to the proposition to which I refer. I want to say at the outset, in tracing our troubles, that I desire to lay at the charge of the Ministry of the day that they are not even as progressive as Mr. James was and as he has proved himself to be. In relation to the Electoral Act, which I may say those gentlemen on the Government benches have proved themselves such adepts in driving a camel team through, they have at times so administered this Act that it was impossible for any elector who had a real regard for his rights of citizenship to know how he stood. We found in the case of Brownhill that no less than 400 voters under the administration of the Act were disfranchised and all through a faulty interpretation, but more especially through the zeal displayed by members on that side of the House had shown that disfranchisement should follow. We have also in Fremantle and Subiaco had those defects clearly exemplified, and it should have been one of the duties of the present Government to include an amendment of them before they make any claims to that liberalism or progressiveness which they certainly are so fond of asseverating. In

order to clear the ground I mention these fundamental impediments in which the Government of the day have been found wanting and have shirked their duty, and therefore paved the way to a far worse condition of things than has existed in the past. This matter for consideration before the House gives at least, amongst some of its advantages, a chance to the party on this side to vindicate itself in some degree; and having in mind what has been so often said by members on the Government side of the House that when the Labour party were in power there was nothing but stagnation stalking through this land, and in view of the statement made by almost every Minister of the Crown on that side and the majority of members who form their following, that as a result of our presence on those Government benches Western Australia was going at a precipitate rate down the hill of depression, it is well in regard to those who are so glib of tongue in making charges of this character that records are kept; records that can stand the railery and even the hardihood of members opposite. It is well first of all that we should turn our attention to the condition of the State during the time when it was said it was fast drifting to perdition in an industrial sense. It is well to consider what the figures of the responsible officers of the Government have to say on the subject. In the first place, let me point out what was done in the matter of expenditure, that was largely responsible for the stagnation evident in this country. As far as the expenditure on the three great employing departments of this State was concerned, we find a marked falling-off during the eleven months of this financial year as compared with the eleven months of last year when the Labour Government were at the helm and when it was generally supposed there was so much hardship felt by the citizens of this country. The expenditure in the three great employing departments of the State, the Railways Department, the Public Works Department, and the Mines Department, during the eleven months of this year, as compared with the eleven months of last year was:—Railways, £70,000 less this year; Public Works £80,000 less this year, and Mines £13,000 less this year, being a total of

£164,000 less spent during the eleven months of this year as compared with the eleven months of last year when the alleged "mark-time" policy was in operation. If to this we add the sum that was taken from the Loan Suspense Account and expended in public buildings and roads, we find that out of revenue alone the expenditure has been something like £200,000 less during this period of eleven months than during the corresponding period of last year. So it is easy to trace the stagnation of the present period to this shortage of expenditure, to this reduction, so to speak, in the national wage sheet of this State. So much for expenditure. Then we come to immigration. Now, what has happened so far as immigration is concerned? The Speech from the Throne states that immigrants are coming to this country at a fast rate and taking up occupations in agriculture. What do the records show? I am sure it is not for the purpose of decrying the State in any regard that I draw attention to this matter. If I am guided by a desire for close imitation of those who have gone before me (because I am simply adopting the methods employed by the former chief of the Government bench, Mr. Rason, he having used precisely the same argument to show that as a result of our occupancy of the Treasury bench the State was not in a flourishing condition) and if I show beyond all doubt that things are not as good in this State as they ought to be, it is not for the purpose of decrying the State, but by way of vindication of the party I support, and to show what folly it is for those gentlemen opposite to farther maintain that we did bring about such havoc in the industrial condition of this State. [MEMBER: You did.] I admire your candour in sticking to your guns, but the records are entirely against you. So far as immigration is concerned, what has taken place during the same comparative periods of eleven months? Last year when the Labour party was in power the arrivals in the State were 27,113 and the departures 19,216, an excess of arrivals over departures of 7,897. During the eleven months of this year ending 31st May the arrivals were 25,116 and the departures 21,156, an excess of arrivals over departures of 3,960. In other words there was double the excess of

arrivals over departures in the same period during last year than has been the case during the eleven months of this year; and when we compare the departures in the relative periods, we find that no less than 1,940 people more left the State during the eleven months of this year than during the same period of last year. In face of these figures, wherein lies the justification for the claim that we were banishing anything in the nature of prosperity from these shores? These figures are undeniable. [MR. A. J. WILSON: They are capable of another interpretation.] Now take the Savings Bank. The gentlemen at present at the wheel of the State do not claim, not officially at all events, to represent the workers of this State; but they do claim, and claim it persistently, to be their friends. Some were so extravagant as to claim that they were better friends of the working man than those on this side of the House. What has taken place in the Savings Bank? The average deposit per head is the unfailing barometer of the prosperity to be found amongst the workers, or those people who put away whatever margin they have to spare for the rainy day of the future. What has happened during the eleven months I am still comparing? In August last year, when certainly we were in power, or rather, on the verge of vacating office—because in order to preserve the uniformity of the comparison I am adopting the eleven months in every instance, and the 40 days of the period when we were still in office should not have any special bearing in the calculation—the average per head was £37 0s. 4d. The present Government came into power in due course, and what has happened during those eleven months? There has been a remarkable and noticeable decline in the average per head, so much so that it dwindled from £37 0s. 4d. to £35 6s. 1d. in May, the lowest that has been experienced in this State for the last nine years. At all events it can be said that during the eleven months of last year there was a comparatively steady level maintained, but during the eleven months of this year we find a steady decline from the sum I have mentioned to that recorded as the lowest for the last nine years.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** That average has been decreasing for the last five years.

**MR. LYNCH:** The hon. member has not been in power for the last five years. During the time we were in power we had a chance of recovering much of the leeway lost in previous years.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** But the number of depositors has increased.

**MR. LYNCH:** Quite so, but it has no particular bearing on the case. It would not be fair to the hon. member to compare what had happened indiscriminately during Mr. Rason's period of office, so I am comparing these two periods of eleven months and showing that a steady decline has occurred. We are in a very much worse condition, so far as these three aspects of the condition of the country are concerned, that is in relation to public expenditure, to immigration of people to our shores, and to the average which it has been possible to record on the savings of workmen. We find that on all three heads we have steadily drifted; and when we come to recall the desperate efforts made by the present Government to rake and scratch every three-penny bit that can be found in the departments in the country, it is after all strange that they could not devote more to the expenditure on public works than was shown in the records. As a sample of the extraordinary anxiety they have shown in retrenching, as far as the Prisons Department is concerned, I wish to mention that the Government have reduced the allowance for prisoners awaiting trial in the back country. It shows the desperate straits they are in, and the result is that in portions of this State the constable in charge of a prisoner awaiting trial is expected to find him on 1s. 11d. a day. [MR. HEITMANN: It is 1s. 4d. on the Murchison.] I am speaking of what I know in my district, and the average is 7½d. per meal. It shows the desperate straits the Government are put to in even starving prisoners to make ends meet, and yet they have not done so. With all our faults the Labour party certainly did not descend to the level of starving prisoners in the back country to a miserable pittance of 7½d. a meal, where meat is now at least 1s. to 1s. 3d. per pound. The cruelty of the position is so apparent that I do not wish to press the point.

Having in mind that the condition of this State is not a prosperous one at present, I would naturally be expected to point to some means for rectifying that to which I have called attention. I am going to do so; and I am sure, as far as my criticism is concerned, it would ill become me as a member of the Labour party to find fault if at the same time I could not find a remedy. The remedy at least lies in a measure in some more reasonable adjustment of taxation. How have the Government applied themselves in the matter of taxation? They have, it is true, introduced a land tax that is so vaguely described in the speech delivered by the Premier at Bunbury that it is hard to believe what it is to be. I am sure that if the tax is for raising revenue and disintegrating those large estates it will fail miserably, unless it is found to be a more genuine measure than was described in the policy speech of the Premier. While this measure was mentioned in the policy speech, it is strange indeed that the natural compliment of this form of taxation was not also mentioned by the Premier and has not found a place in the desire of the Government who introduce the land tax. I refer particularly to the necessity of an income tax in this State. Economists that have gone before have recognised that there is a close connection, or series of connections, between finance and economics; and we have the authority of Adam Smith, who has been, as far as British finances are concerned, and whose influence is felt—

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** Will you always follow him?

**MR. LYNCH:** I will follow him where I find him correct. Adam Smith in some respects has given admirable lessons, in others if he were alive to-day, he might learn. Adam Smith states that a subject of every State ought to contribute towards the cost of Government as nearly as possible in proportion to his ability to do so. I believe members will accept that as a sound doctrine. Those who enjoy whatever protection the Government of this country or any country affords should be ready and willing to pay towards the upkeep of the Government; but when we find a Government shirking their duty in adjusting the finances of the State, then I find serious fault with them in leaving out what has been



the natural complement of land taxation as introduced in New Zealand, in South Australia, and I believe in New South Wales. When the Government neglect to introduce an income tax they fail in the highest duty that falls on a Government in seeing that something approaching a reasonable burden should fall on all alike in proportion. I am asked my grounds for complaining about the Government in this regard. I say they are failing in their duty in not introducing an income tax. This State at the present time is in a better position to stand an income tax than any other State in Australasia to-day.

MR. GREGORY: Was it not 12 months ago?

MR. LYNCH: An income tax would be in force to-day only we did not hang on with such death-like tenacity to the Treasury bench as the hon. members opposite. An income tax would have been an accomplished fact if we had remained on the Treasury bench, but to-day it seems in the shadowy distance. I am asked for my reason. My reason is that we are in a better position in this State to pay an income tax, and to insist that it should be paid, than any State in the Australasian group. As far as the records of that standard authority Coghlan is concerned, he shows very plainly that this State is very favourably situated for the imposition of an income tax. He shows unmistakably that Western Australia, as compared with the other States of the group, on one head alone, leaving out of consideration the incomes drawn by debentureholders in England, incomes derived from private sources in each of the States, was as follow:—New South Wales, £45 2s. per head; Victoria, £44 8s.; Queensland, £40 6s.; South Australia, £39; Western Australia, £79; Tasmania, £44; and New Zealand, £47; so that this comparison alone shows that over 100 per cent. more than South Australia is our average income derived from private sources. The gradation varies in a gentle way, until finally it reaches New Zealand, and our incomes are 68 per cent. more than they are in that State. Between South Australia where an income tax obtains, and New Zealand also, there is a gentle gradation from 68 per cent. to 100 per

cent. We have no income tax, and there appears no desire on the part of the Government to impose one here. We will proceed farther. The next table, according to this authority, gives the matter on a population basis. It is rather like the Premier's speech, a ponderous subject. It shows the incomes according to the population. The incomes under £200, as well as over £200, are shown, and these will form some food for reflection for those who say there is no need for an income tax. The population of New South Wales as compared with this State shows that New South Wales has six times (that was when this calculation was made in 1903-4) the population of this State, and the total incomes over £200 a year in New South Wales were only four and a half times those of this State. Victoria comes next with six times the population, and the total incomes over £200 are only four times; Queensland comes next with two and a half times the population, but with only one-fourth more of the total incomes I have referred to. South Australia comes next with 50 per cent. more population, and with £400,000 less on the aggregate incomes over £200 a year. New Zealand is the last, showing they have four times the population, and that they have half the total income of this State. On that head alone it is clearly shown, in company with the comparison I have stated previously, that on a point of population alone this State is shown to be in a highly favourable position that should certainly induce any Government who were desirous of carrying out their responsibilities to the people to see that an income tax was introduced.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Yet the Savings Bank's deposits are so low.

MR. LYNCH: The incomes below £200 I can give. New South Wales incomes, total £45,000,000 under £200, in Victoria £35,000,000, Queensland £15,000,000, South Australia £10,000,000, also Western Australia £13,000,000, Tasmania £5,000,000, New Zealand £29,000,000, so that on a matter of incomes below £200 we stand in a very favourable position indeed. In New South Wales the percentage which incomes over £200 bear to private property is 5·2, Victoria 5·6, Queensland 4·5, South Australia 4·5, Western Aus-

tralia 8·9, Tasmania 4·5, New Zealand 4·1. Roughly speaking the ratio of incomes is 100 per cent. more here than in any other State. That is the last comparison.

MR. WILSON: Does Coghlan give the ratio of incomes 100 per cent. more?

MR. LYNCH: That is his calculation. It gives Western Australia 8·9, New Zealand 4·1, that is less than 100 per cent. I say roughly speaking the ratio of incomes is 100 per cent. more here than in any other State; that is the incomes over £200 and the ratio in the aggregate they bear to private property. The average incomes over £200—what is it? What does Coghlan say on the subject? New South Wales, average incomes over £200, £658; Victoria £645, Queensland £569, South Australia £317, Western Australia £726, Tasmania £561, New Zealand £575; so that the increase in our average incomes over £200 range from 10 per cent. in the case of New South Wales to 4 per cent. in the case of New Zealand, and 127 per cent. in the case of South Australia.

THE PREMIER: How does Mr. Coghlan arrive at his estimate of incomes in Western Australia where we have no income tax?

MR. LYNCH: I do not know, I am sure. The reply I shall give to that question will be by way of advice to the Premier. I have never heard Mr. Coghlan's authority yet seriously contested, although it would be perfectly in order for anyone to do so; but seeing that this authority which stands as remarkable in the giving of data and estimates and details in the *Seven Colonies of Australasia*, as Wilson's Promontory is on this coast, is never contested, I warn the Premier not to contest these figures.

THE PREMIER: In the other States there are income tax commissioners. In this State we have none.

MR. LYNCH: The source of the information is not explained. I have come to the end of my tether in showing that this State is more favourably placed for the imposition of an income tax than any other State in Australia. That has been clearly shown by the records I have given to the House, viewed from many standpoints. When we see the Government of the day have failed to couple with a land tax the proposal for

an income tax, they justly deserve any stringent criticism which may be given from this or the other side of the House. We also notice by the Speech from the Throne, as it is sometimes called—and the missing parts of it are the remarkable features of the Speech—no mention of need for an amendment of the Arbitration Act, which should be made at as early a date as possible. When we view the industrial positions that obtain between the employers and the employees as a result of the defective administration of that measure, there is no doubt in my mind, and in the mind of every man we represent on this side of the House, as well as most of those represented by members on the other side, of the urgent necessity there lies in the need for an amendment of that measure that will give it the semblance of what was intended by those who were its sponsors. Men on the goldfields and in the timber districts want the measure that was primarily intended to settle industrial disputes. There is to be no move made to amend the measure so as to serve the purpose for which it was intended. I find a Mines Regulation Amendment mentioned, but in that regard I am going to watch with all the agility I command the action of the Minister for Mines when bringing forward that measure. It is strange, in view of the pressing need for amending the Mines Regulation Act to cope with the conditions for the farther exploitation of our mines, that there has not been a more lengthy reference to what the Minister for Mines intends in this regard. I shall watch closely what the Minister intends to do in regard to the present Mines Regulations Act, so that it may be brought to a pitch of efficiency, so that it shall minimise as far as human foresight can secure the risk to life and limb in the working of our mines in the extended depths. Another noticeable omission from the Speech is the subject of old age pensions, referred to by the member for Greenough (Mr. Stone); and in another speech, while listening to the vague generalities delivered at Bunbury, we notice no reference to any tangible proposal to help the mining industry in a practical manner, apart altogether from the slipshod, haphazard style in which it has

been helped in the past—a method of helping to which I am about to refer. It is my intention at the earliest possible moment to test the sympathy of this Chamber in the matter of assisting miners who are in need of State aid—assistance for the erection of plants, the erection of pumping machinery, and the erection of winding machinery that is now so necessary to convert very many of our struggling shows into profitable concerns. It is my intention, when the opportunity serves, and very early, to test the sympathies of this House in that regard; to see how members are inclined towards the miner as compared with the agriculturist; to see how they will feel towards the proposed allocation of a sum that will be at the call of any miner in any part of the mineral area of this State, who has a proposition that can be reasonably reckoned as a good show, so that such a man may come to the Government, and if he prove his *bona fides* as the possessor of a profitable proposition, may be assisted either with pumping machinery, winding machinery, or even with a battery. On that question I will test the sympathy of the House; and I should like to see a more extended reference by the Minister for Mines to placing the industry on the same basis in this respect as the agricultural industry has been so deservedly placed in the past. I should like to suggest, in passing, for the benefit of the Minister, that in going through the back country in was abundantly noticeable that men owning struggling mining propositions can be materially helped by the provision of pumping plants. There are at Midland Junction I know not how many locomotives turning into rust; and they could be put to a profitable use by the engineers in charge of the Mines Department, and could be left at the disposal of prospectors in the back country to drain their properties. I bring this under the notice of the Minister for Mines, to see what value is in the suggestion. I recognise that these boilers which are rusting away at Midland can be used at a reduced pressure, and turned to account in the distant areas of our goldfields. I have now finished my references to the Governor's Speech, to what is in it, and particularly to what is not in it; and I come to a few items

under the head of administration. But before coming to them I must refer to a incident that happened during the career of the present Government, and during the Fremantle electoral contest. I wish to deplore the fact that this new Government, at its very outset, at the very entry into power, saw fit to sully the good name which perhaps it was likely to deserve in the future, by tactics which it either adopted or winked at during the Fremantle contest. And I have only to say it is my duty to make special reference to the conduct of that election, in the hope that not only Fremantle but other electorates farther afield will benefit by the unworthy conduct of the campaign. As far as Mr. Price, the sitting member, is concerned, I think I am on fairly reasonable speaking terms with him, and towards him I have no ill-will; but I certainly cannot say that I was favourably struck by the manner in which he conducted that contest on his own account, or by the aid he got from some Ministers of the Crown. I wish to say that this (Opposition) side of the House has a special interest in seeing that elections are conducted on clean lines. I believe that members on the Government side, most of them, have an interest in seeing this State preserved from any unclean methods in the conduct of elections; and therefore I appeal to those members, in all confidence, not to treat this as a party question because politics is a kind of profession that is liable to change its sponsors at any moment, and the men who are there may be supplanted by the men now on this side of the House, and who should be desirous of seeing election contests carried out on approved lines. And I feel that in this matter everything savouring of party spirit ought to be eliminated from this discussion, and ignored also in the course of the treatment that may afterwards be meted out to those who played so prominent a part in that Fremantle election. We in Opposition know that we have been subjected to many accusations formulated by the inventive genius of members opposite and their friends in the country. But I venture to assert in all seriousness that even the worst of those lies circulated concerning us never reached the shameful point that was plumbed by some members opposite in the course of that

contest. We have been accused of bringing into being and promoting an era of stagnation in this country; we have been accused of borrowing in excess of our promises on the hustings, of imposing battery charges on the poor prospectors in the back country—a charge which, I may say, has no foundation in fact; we have been accused also by Government supporters on the front Ministerial bench of every paltry and despicable action—accusations having, as I say, no foundation in fact. Members now on the Ministerial bench sought to gain the confidence of their fellows—and by what means? In sober seriousness they asked the electors of this State to believe that the party on this side of the House were directly responsible for the introduction of cheap meals in connection with this Assembly. Government supporters and members of the Ministry at the present day sought to secure the confidence of the electors of this State by saddling upon this party—wrongfully, of course—the creation in that Cottage over the way of what they called a “happy home.” Now, what are the facts of the case? Those gentlemen opposite have done their worst to blacken our character, and wrongfully. Those Ministers who now grace the front bench did not scruple to go into the very parliamentary kitchen to invent a lie in order to bring us into popular disfavour, knowing that among the frailties of human nature there is one standing trait that seems to resist all education and all training, that there is in human nature a proneness to believe anything that reflects injuriously either on a man or a body of men. And those Ministers of the Crown, in the hope of gaining ascendancy for themselves, asked the people of Western Australia to believe that we Labour members were associated with that home—which assertion was a lie. But I say that among all the applications of the perverted genius of those men opposite in saddling accusations upon us, the worst accusation did not reach the depth actually reached by them in the Fremantle contest. When the day comes on which the party now in Opposition have to descend to tactics of this kind—tactics that were so palpable during that Fremantle contest—I hope that the Labour party will be wiped out of existence in this and every other State where

it may resort to such conduct. I hope it will be banished for evermore, never to exercise any farther influence on the public life and actions of men. The Government of the day, like every other Government that has come into being from the time that the power of Government has been slowly transferred from the monarch to the people, has always had to rely on public opinion. And I assert, especially for the benefit of those on the Government benches, that the tactics noticeable at Fremantle are just as likely to charge home on themselves at any moment as they are likely to injure any other party in this House or out of it. The Government tactics are just as likely to injure themselves, and with fatal results, too. In reviewing the Fremantle election contests, let us, in the first instance, take the rolls. What was done by this Government in the matter of the rolls? We found that in the Fremantle electorate the rolls were tampered with by the Government of the day. We found that a roll was in the ordinary course made up by applications and transfers that were lodged up to the date of the issue of the writ; and owing to a contradiction of orders from the head office in Perth, either from the Attorney General's office or from some other Minister who was conducting that department at the time, we found that the names entered on that list, 58 in number—names which were, to all intents and purposes, entered on the roll—were, by some despotic order, ruled out. We found also that a number of applications and transfers was sent forward to Perth from the Fremantle electorate, and presented to the Government Printing Office to be printed. The Government of the day, or those responsible for the printing—the Opposition cannot be saddled with the responsibility—issued an order to the Government Printing Office to cease printing, with the result that the office proceeded only as far as the letter “R” in the list of names submitted. I want to ask those administrators on the Government side to cite authorities for issuing an order in the case of the Fremantle rolls, to arrest the printing of those names in an arbitrary fashion at the letter “R,” and at the same time to allow, as they certainly did allow in the case of the Metropolitan-Suburban constituency and

every other constituency, those applications to be entered within a day of the issue of the writs. I want to know why, in the case of Fremantle, that arbitrary and despotic order was issued to stop printing the rolls. I want to know why it is that there was one law for Fremantle, and another law to apply for other constituencies. That is the point I want cleared. [MEMBER: It is almost impossible to clear it.] We also notice that during the course of that contest the Government were so eager to know what was to be done in Fremantle that they rushed into that electorate to see—to see what? [MEMBER: The dock.] To see as far as possible, I fancy, who would have a chance of voting, and the result is plainly shown by this order to the Government Printer to cease printing. We find them even enlisting the services of police officers of the State, who went round under special instructions, I am justified in assuming, to see that those names on the supplementary roll were looked into carefully, and the owners of names on that roll were to be told, as they were told in many instances if not in all, that if they changed their places of residence from one part of the electorate to another, they would forfeit their right of voting. I want to know, seeing the vigilance they exercised in directing attention to this supplementary roll, why the authorities did not give some attention to the old roll? Is it not rather suggestive that it was because Mr. Price was returned on the old roll? There was no necessity to trouble about it, but there was great necessity to trouble about the supplementary roll; and whoever is responsible, the matter should certainly form a subject for searching inquiry. The responsibility rests on the head of the person who issued those orders, and who deluded the electors of Fremantle into securing the election of a nominee. The Minister for Mines has said, in reference to the supplementary roll, that it played no great part in the particular contest. I have only to say that it occasions me much regret to have to refer to instances with which he is familiar. It is as well to speak plainly, so that misunderstandings and explanations may be avoided hereafter. In the first place, we have Mr. Price himself taking the

platform at Fremantle, and in a style peculiar to himself assuring the electors at Fremantle that any man who says a private member can do more for the constituency than a Minister of the Crown should write himself down for a fool. [MEMBER: Nice state of affairs.] Mr. Price made that statement in cold blood at the King's Hall, Fremantle. We find again the same candidate, in his zeal in the matter of persuading the electors of Fremantle, issued a remarkable dodger, which I hold here. [Interjections.] It contains his photograph, which is about the only picturesque item in it. This brings me to remark also that it seems to be a natural habit of members of the present Government to avail themselves of the services of the photographer. In fact, during the last election and last week there was plentiful evidence of the faces of Ministers on the hoardings of this city. Turning to other walks in life, there is a very close affinity between quackery and the photographer's art. I do not pose to the public as a purist, and I am not saying that the Ministry of the day are resorting to that paltry dodge; but it certainly does seem as if they had a desire to be taken at their face value. Coming to the serious part of the subject, we find this dodger contains what I consider the offence of the Minister for Works. After a lengthy reference to several things that could be done in the way of docks and other works for Fremantle, he asks the electors to ask themselves who can best help them—a Minister of the Crown who has charge of the Public Works Department, or a private member with a weak position. [MEMBERS: Scandalous! Shocking!] That dodger was issued under the hand of the secretary to the Minister for Works, a responsible Minister of the Crown, during the course of the election contest. [LABOUR MEMBER: He ought to be thoroughly ashamed of himself.] I do not wish to give the hon. member any more castigation than I can help; but we certainly are obliged to turn our attention also to his colleague, the present Minister for Mines. Mr. Gregory was very early in the field to render assistance, and he complained that as no opposition had been offered on the fields to the re-election of the Labour Ministers, no opposition should be given to Mr. Price, and that, therefore, it was

in the nature of sacrilege to offer opposition to Mr. Price. Mr. Gregory quite forgot that he was the chief underground engineer to bring opposition to me in the Mount Leonora electorate; he quite forgot that he used all the efforts he could, by supplying horses to bring men to struggle against me up there, with the rather humiliating result that I was returned by a majority or two to one. How do we find Mr. Gregory to-day? He asked the Fremantle electors to come up to the scratch. He said that if Mr. Price were defeated—and it is this sentence I find fault with—it would not affect the Government—[MEMBER: Yes; it would]—but would do much injury to Fremantle. I want to ask what possible interpretation can be put upon a method of that kind, unless it be that by the election of Mr. Price some form of retribution or vengeance would be visited on Fremantle for its action. There is no other interpretation that can be placed upon that statement. I know, and feel certain, that quibbling will be indulged in, but the Minister has declared himself. It is hardly worth bothering with, because time is on the wing. I must say, however, in this regard that after all he is not to be indulged for it. The Minister for Mines seems to have got into a chronic habit of making statements of this kind whenever the electors are about to cast their votes. I have here among my papers a circular issued in Menzies, wherein the Minister for Mines stated that he was prepared to reduce the crushing charges on all stuff of five or six pennyweights. [MEMBER: Same old promise.] That was one of the inducements held out by the Minister for Mines to the electors at Menzies, showing that Mr. Gregory, or rather the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Mines alone, was the only person in this State who could fulfil the promises given. It is quite true that he could reduce these crushing charges without reference to his colleagues, but he may have proposed to refer the question to them. The fact remains that this inducement was held out to the electors of Menzies, that Mr. Gregory was in favour of the reduction of those charges on five and six penny-weight dirt. The essence of the statement is that we know the Minister for Mines, as

far as the charge for crushing is concerned, can reduce or increase at his will. He certainly might consult his colleagues, but he is the only man that could do it without incurring the displeasure of his colleagues; and he was the only candidate before that electorate who could do it. In other words, he alone was the man on the fields who could carry out the promise. That is what I consider a lamentable lapse on the part of the Minister for Mines when before the electors at Menzies. We now come to the Premier himself. I know the Premier—perhaps by the company he comes in contact with. Speaking about the construction of the dock in Fremantle, which seems to be the alpha and omega of their existence down there, and seeing also that the construction of the dock was regarded in the past by Premiers and Governments as being a work which was in every sense a Government work, I want to ask him, without being unnecessarily severe on him, why when he made his speech at Bunbury he did not appeal to the Fremantle electors on every other item that savoured of a national character. This is the statement:—

It is our intention to give the Fremantle Harbour Trust the constructive powers which have been asked for by the Fremantle members—

the member for North Fremantle can correct me if I am wrong—

and I believe it to be the wish of the people of the port. However, the result of the election on Friday will indicate whether the town endorses the action we propose to take.

Herein comes the full force of this suggestion. [MEMBER: Evil be to him who evil thinks.] I want to ask the Premier why he thought it necessary, of all the numerous items in his policy speech, to appeal to Fremantle on this point alone, in view of the fact that former Governments and former Premiers had looked upon this work in a national sense.

MEMBER: From a long way off.

At 6-30, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair resumed.

MR. LYNCH (continuing): When we adjourned for lunch this evening I was engaged in the effort of analysing the motives of the Premier at Bunbury when

he singled out the construction of a dock as the one subject upon which he expected the electors of that constituency to indorse the policy of the Government. I was drawing attention to the fact that the Fremantle dock is a particular work which had been regarded by the Premiers and Governments preceding Mr. Moore as one of national importance; in other words, as a work that did not necessarily concern only the electors within the four boundaries of the Fremantle electorate; and I was naturally anxious to know in common with a number of members of the House why it was that he singled this particular work out of the many works that were mentioned in his policy speech, to make it a kind of conveyance of his desire to the Fremantle electors that they should return Mr. Price. I can only say that the construction that any impartially constituted mind could put upon the appeal of the Premier was that he wanted them to look on this work as a work that would be taken in hand if Mr. Price was chosen, and that it would not be taken in hand or would otherwise be postponed if Mr. Needham was chosen. That was the only possible construction I could put upon the Premier's remarks when he used his position and all the power of the Government to appeal to the Fremantle electors in the light in which, I contend, he has appealed to them. Mr. Keenan was also down at Fremantle to help and reinforce the Government on that occasion, and although he poses, and I believe has some justification for so doing, as a strong-minded man, he said that as far as the construction of the dock was concerned if there was any man who would convince him of the need of its construction that man was Mr. Price; although he had previously said to a Kalgoorlie audience—as a Minister of the Crown—and to the citizens of Western Australia, that whenever he intended to say “no,” there was no man who could convince him or compel him to say “yes.” Yet on this occasion he referred to Mr. Price as the only person who was then available who could exercise such a talismanic influence over him. I have to make one single reference to the Minister for Mines when he was down there rendering assistance to Mr. Price, solely because his statement, I take it, may reflect upon myself.

That is, provided he made that statement in a way which reconciles it with the construction the average man would put upon it. Mr. Gregory, when he was addressing a Fremantle audience said:—

They had an illustration of this a short time ago when a platitude-speaking party, getting a chance to do something, had merely punctured—and that pretty quickly, and to his mind for the benefit of the country.

A Voice: They retired gracefully, at any rate.

The Minister for Mines: I believe it was because they could not purchase the Midland Railway. (Applause.)

I think I have as keen a sense of personal honour as the average man in this Chamber, and although I may be able to acquit Mr. Gregory as to the meaning that statement was intended to convey, yet I know and am fully conscious of the interpretation placed on that statement by most people in this country. I have heard the statement repeatedly made that the Labour Government resigned because they could not purchase the Midland Railway, and never yet did I hear that reason assigned for the resignation of the Labour Government that it was not closely and directly associated with the insinuation that the Government, including my humble self, were engaged in some sort of dark operation for the sake of feathering our own nests. I say it is possible to acquit Mr. Gregory of a statement as meaning any reflection upon me or my colleagues, but at the same time—[Interjection by the MINISTER FOR MINES.] I shall be glad to have your assurance here. At the same time there is one authority in this State who is in a position to know the true import of that statement, and he alone is in a position to say so. He saw the statement next day in the Press, and he said that it was unworthy of the Minister to make such a statement, and that as far as the Labour members were concerned if any impression prevailed that we were looking for any recompense or remuneration it was a lie. He added, “That statement is more than I would make about other politicians in the House.” It brings me to the necessity of saying that if the Minister for Mines wanted to cast a reflection upon the Labour Government, and if he made that charge, with the insinuation that we were engaged in this unworthy object, that statement is an unmitigated, a false, and

a cowardly lie. I take this opportunity not only of vindicating my own personal honour but the honour of the other five gentlemen who for the time being were called upon to direct the affairs of this State, and who to this day have borne the brunt of this impression which prevails in a section of the public mind. We have not had an opportunity, until to-night, of flinging back the insinuation in the teeth of those who dare to charge us with such a thing, and to-night the hour has come when we shall be vindicated. I say that if Mr. Gregory or any other white or black man in this State declared that we were engaged in an unworthy effort, directly or indirectly, it is, as I stated before, a lie of a description for which I can hardly find suitable adjectives in the language to describe it. I will pass from that subject, and as we have been engaged in referring to the conduct of Ministers in the Fremantle contest, and especially to the central figure of that contest, Mr. Price himself, I want to ask Ministers, or any member on that side of the House, would they stand idly by and listen to any Minister of the Crown on those benches asking the question that Mr. Price asked? Would any member on that side of the House stand by without a blush of indignation if he heard for instance the Minister for Lands say, "Ask yourselves who can help the constituency of Bunbury most, a Minister for Lands or a private member of a weak Opposition?" If the Premier had lost his self-control to such an extent as to make such a statement, would the impression not clearly have been that as far as his administration of the Lands Department was concerned, it would be strained in the direction of favouring the Bunbury people and no one else. I am coming to the question which Mr. Price asked. Mr. Price asked the Fremantle electors, "Ask yourselves who can help Fremantle most, a Minister of the Crown who has charge of the public works, or a private member of a weak Opposition?" I am simply using the same terms, the same identical query, when applied to every other department occupied by those gentlemen. Would they have stood by and listened or tolerated the Attorney General, say, asking the Kalgoorlie electors: "Who will serve you best, a Minister of the

Crown who is in charge of the Justice Department, or a private member of a weak Opposition?" The inference would clearly be that if he were foolish enough, criminal enough, to say that he would strain the Justice Department in order to favour the electors of Kalgoorlie, and if the Minister for Lands were foolish enough to say the same thing, the same construction would be placed upon it as the electors of Fremantle would place upon it. There are the mines of this State, which must be impartially administered by the Minister for Mines. There are the lands of this State, of which for the time being the Minister for Lands is the sole custodian. There is the Minister for Works, who presides over the department for the time being, and he should be an impartial custodian and jealous guardian, and while he is in this position there is a certain amount of money to be fairly and legitimately distributed according to the needs of the electors of this State. Wherein comes the difference between other members of the Crown appealing in the same fashion as Mr. Price, and Mr. Price doing so? Would not the construction put upon the language used by Mr. Price be that he would shovel money into his electorate without giving impartial consideration to the legitimacy of the claims, in order to put himself forward and insure his political success? I say no other possible conclusion can be come to than that such remarks, if uttered by Ministers of the several departments, would appeal to the electors in the same way as did those by the Minister for Works. I am forced to this conclusion, that while we have a Minister in such a position that he can use his influence in a way that his colleagues would not dare to, that is to say to leave it to be clearly inferred—though inference is hardly the word to describe the task before the electors of Fremantle—to leave it open to them to clearly anticipate that he would shovel money into their electorate, he cannot give just and impartial consideration to the claims of the other 49 electorates of the State. I pass from this subject by asking members: after all, what is the use of this Parliament, or any other Parliament, for the time being straining their nerves and exhausting all the means that human ingenuity can



suggest in forming Electoral Acts to regulate the actions of men ; where is the use of penalising the unfortunate candidate on the fields or elsewhere who gives a drink, or shouts a meal, or does any of the several other things that come under the category of corrupt practices, when it is plainly possible that a Minister of the Crown can go down to his constituency and by a breath of suggestion do infinitely more harm than if all these regulations were suspended and regarded as waste-paper ?

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES :** You must have had a very bad experience when you were Minister.

**MR. LYNCH :** It would be human folly to expect that there will be any creditable conditions so long as it is possible for public opinion to tolerate Ministers of the Crown going to any place and making such exhibitions of themselves as they did on that occasion. The Minister for Mines refers to myself. I always prefer to leave others to speak for me, believing as I do that there was a lot in Mark Twain's philosophy when he said that it is never wise to speak well of a man until he is dead, because by that time he can hardly—I was going to say, turn dog on you. When a man is dead there is reasonable certainty that he is not going to make false your eulogy. I did not wish to speak of myself had I not been pushed to it by the Minister for Mines. What did I do at Leonora ? It is on record. I went to every centre, large or small, I had the opportunity of appealing to, and I took particular care to tell them that it was for them to blot out of their minds all thoughts and recollections that I occupied a Ministerial position, and was on that account capable of bringing any consideration to Leonora electors. That is on record. I appealed to the electors of Leonora as I hope I always shall, for two reasons : first of all for careful and impartial consideration of the views I held, which are usually called policy ; and secondly, for a reasonable assessment of the way in which I had acquitted myself in Parliament in their service. Did I ask them to choose a Minister of the Crown who could serve Leonora best ? No ; it never entered my mind ; and I hope that as long as breath remains in my frail carcase, my body, I will do the same, and that those who are in my party will

do likewise, and that they will not follow the unworthy example set them at Fremantle. I was forced to tell this concerning myself ; but those at Leonora know how I conducted my campaign. I was forced to make a personal reference on account of the stimulus given by the remark of the Minister for Mines. I hope we have had sufficient sad experience in the great western nation, America, in the Tammany Hall tactics that have so polluted the public life of a portion of the States, and in the "spoils to the victors" doctrine that appears to be the all-pervading influence in the politics of that mighty nation. I hope that though we have not yet reached the stage of industrial progress that has marked the progress of that country, we will at least preserve the cherished characteristics of British institutions—purity of public life—as far as lays in our parliamentary power. The era of rotten boroughs when the boroughs were at the gift of the privileged classes is past, and the time that formed a standing blot on civilisation in other parts of the world has gone by ; but at the same time, what is the difference between then and to-day if we now attempt to debase public life in this manner ? The Minister for Works smiles, but he had better smile last if he can. What is the difference between the patronage exercised as it was in the case of the rotten boroughs when place and power were obtained by the base exercise of the substance and influence of the individual, and that exercised in this case where the power of the Government and the substance of the community were brought to bear to win a seat for one of their own adherents ? The present position is infinitely worse than the case of the rotten boroughs that were wiped out in 1832. I think I have come to the end of what I desire to say on this unsavoury subject. I started off by drawing the attention of the House to what was in the policy speech, to the half desires that were expressed and to the many things wanting in it ; and as a member of the Opposition, I wish to say that we stand for nothing more nor less than for that policy which has been the means of immortalising one of the noblest, if not the noblest, of figures in those lands of the Southern Seas. We stand for that policy which is in a great measure materialised under the leadership of the

late Richard John Seddon. In noticing how New Zealand has progressed under that policy, and in striving towards it, it will be incumbent on us to unceasingly point out to the Government their failings and shortcomings and the marvellous distance they have already dropped behind that man who has been venerated by all the English-speaking race in all portions of the world. To show the effect that policy has had upon the Island State, I will briefly detain the House a few minutes by comparing what has taken place in New Zealand with what has taken place in the Commonwealth. John Ballance assumed power in New Zealand in 1891. The population for the five years previously showed an excess of departures over arrivals of 19,000, but for the 11 years that succeeded the incoming of what was practically the Seddon Government, the excess of arrivals over departures was 54,000. Now, what has taken place in Australia, a long way behind through not adopting the policy which has memorised Mr. Seddon? There was an actual excess of departures over arrivals in the same 11 years, from 1891 to 1902, of 2,272. When we on these benches are endeavouring in a humble way to follow the footsteps of the man whose policy has been responsible for the material progress of New Zealand, we can easily stand the jeers of some unthinking men in this Chamber and out of it so long as our desire and fixed purpose is patent, to institute in this State such an order of things on the lines I have indicated that Western Australia will march at the same rate of progress as New Zealand has. I believe it is easily possible; and it is for the purpose of pointing out the difference between the policy enunciated in the Governor's Speech and the policy which would have been enunciated if we had been on the Treasury benches, that I have taken up so much time of the House. It is to be hoped that whatever remarks I have made to-night, though perhaps made somewhat in the heat of the moment, are taken as made by one conscientiously believing them to be in the interests, not only of this party, but of the large section which we represent outside of the House, and of the larger section of the community we hope to represent at an early date. It is to be hoped also that the Government will

take heed of what has been said by myself in the hope that an improvement will be made in the milk-and-watery policy before the House to-night, and that though they have not adopted the full policy, they will so amend the portion adopted that, when it comes to be described in detail, we will have something worthy of discussion. I thank members for hearing me. I hope that my remarks will be heeded by members on the Government benches.

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Katanning): I think it is an old saying that one side of the story is all very well until the other side is told. Although we have listened to-night to the remarks of the hon. member—and I give him all credit for his earnestness and desire to put his side of the question in as fair a way as possible—yet after all, I think he perhaps in his zeal and desire has in a measure, in looking through his spectacles, placed a wrong impression and a decidedly unfair one upon the actions of the Minister for Works. I have only had the pleasure of knowing that gentleman for a few months; but from what I know of him, and from the earnestness with which he has taken up his work, and with his practical knowledge and evident desire to do his duty to the country, I feel that the hon. member has been much maligned to-night in certain directions, and when he has an opportunity I expect he will be able to give a good account of himself. I think in regard to these matters, although it is within the province of members to perhaps in a measure condemn the actions of others, still at the same time I always think it is well to be fair and not to look on all matters with such extreme views. In regard to the Speech of His Excellency I may say that it gives me pleasure to rise on this occasion to make a few remarks in reference thereto. This is an opportunity, I take it, of the commencement of good things for this country. We have seen so many changes during the past few years. Since 1901 there have been continual changes of Government and unrest throughout the State and interference with the general progress in consequence. We are all to blame perhaps. The older members, too, who have taken part in the affairs of the country for years cannot hold themselves free from

blame. In the old days we had that long continuous Government known as the Forrest Ministry, of which I formed a part at one time; and although it was a long period of administration in this country, it has been followed by an unrestful state of things, which I hope has ended, and I trust this session is the commencement of a change in the state of affairs. As to the *personnel* of the Government, I would like to say, although from a political standpoint in the past I may have differed from these gentlemen, I feel at this stage there is so much which is necessary in the interests of the country to be done just now, that we must endeavour as far as possible to sink some of our political ideas; not that their discontinuance should interfere with the well-being of the country. Views should not be sunk if they are of an important character; but perhaps there are some which can be set aside to bring about a better condition of things. So far as the Government are concerned I offer them my congratulations on the commencement of their work, and I specially offer to the Premier congratulation in the most hearty manner. Although young in years and political experience, I think, after all, it is admitted he has an earnest desire to do his duty to the country. He is a West Australian, with a thorough knowledge of the country. It does not make him any the better because he can claim Western Australia as his native land; but I feel his knowledge of the country will be of advantage. There are some men in the Cabinet to-day (coming from other parts of the world) equally able to carry on the duties, yet with a Leader who has a knowledge of every part of the country I think we are strengthened because of that knowledge. With reference to the matters contained in the Speech, it is not my intention to deal with many of them except to casually refer to one or two matters that should be touched upon. But I wish particularly to deal with two matters which are referred to. One is the question of the proposed land tax, which I expect members thought I would refer to, and the other is in reference to the Public Service Commissioner. Now generally dealing with the Speech, I would like to refer to two matters, to gold-mining and land settlement in con-

junction with each other. When I speak of land settlement I am not only referring to agricultural pursuits but to pastoral pursuits also. I am sure we can date our prosperity from the discovery of gold in this State. A great impetus was given to the agricultural and pastoral industry. Those interested in these two great interests are working in more harmony for the country than they have done in the past. At one time there was a great deal of discontent on the gold-fields with reference to the treatment which, it was said, was meted out to that distant part of the country by the agriculturists. I think latterly it has been seen that the people in the agricultural parts of the country are equally interested with those on the goldfields in doing all they can to bring about a better state of things. In regard to the developmental railways alluded to, there will be another opportunity of dealing with them; but I would now like to say I am glad the Government have decided to proceed farther with the construction of these lines, for I am of opinion that the only way we can open up the vast resources of the country is by giving easy means of communication to those who are likely to make their homes on the land. There is one other subject I would like to refer briefly to, and that is in reference to the Commonwealth. I have heard it stated here, and also on the public platform, that the treatment we have received and the proposal to deal with our finances in the manner it has been suggested that the Commonwealth are likely to deal with them, have brought forward much condemnation. I would like to say, although there may be some good grounds for complaint, at the same time I feel there must be among that body of men who are representing us in the Parliament of the Commonwealth men who will look on our special and just circumstances and deal with us in the manner that they would like to be dealt by. We are due for special consideration. That was recognised when the Constitution Act was brought forward, and it will be remembered that we then obtained certain concessions—the continuance of our five years' sliding scale under the customs tariff in connection with Eastern imports, and we had

also other privileges and advantages given to us to induce us to join the Federation. As one who was most strongly opposed to entering the Federation at that time, and one who stated that although feeling the principle was one which must be adopted in the future but should be deferred for ten years or more if necessary, I say that I took that objection because I felt that the special circumstances needed special administration which could be carried out far more satisfactorily by ourselves under the then existing conditions of Government than by entering the Commonwealth. This has been proved to be the case. At the same time I want to say that although I opposed Federation I would be the last person to-day to bring about the severance from Federation that has been threatened in some instances. I think that now we have entered the Federation it would be folly and madness to talk of secession. We must make the best we can of the circumstances, relying on the fair-mindedness of the statesmen in the Parliament of the Commonwealth to do their duty by Western Australia. I am pleased to note an amendment of the Land Act is to be brought in. We have prospered under our old Land Act, which was looked on as the most favourable of all land settlement conditions in Australia; we have done well under it; but the circumstances which applied when the last amending Act was passed in 1902 do not apply now. We have seen changes; the conditions have altered, settlement having gone on apace. It is in the interests of the country now that a Bill should be brought in dealing with the new conditions ruling. I hope in the wisdom of the Government such a Bill will be brought forward as will commend itself to the House for the fartherance of land settlement, and the improvement of the conditions generally and increased development, one that will be of equal service to the country as in the past. No doubt it will be a most important measure and deserve the gravest and most earnest consideration of members. I am looking to the very great assistance in the framing of that Bill and the passing of it into law on fair and generous lines that will best serve the interests of the State which will be rendered by the member for Northam

(Mr. Mitchell), who has recently taken up an honorary portfolio. With his knowledge of the subject and with the special knowledge which the Premier possesses of this country, I hope sincerely a Bill such as will prove of great advantage to the State will be passed into law. In reference to the other matters I alluded to, I wish first to take the question of the Public Service Commissioner. In seconding the Address-in-Reply, the member for Collie (Mr. Ewing) stated that he had not read the Commissioner's report, but certainly there were lots who had and had criticised it. He farther stated that he strongly condemned the proposed acts and the recommendations of the Commissioner on hearsay evidence. I think it is unfair to take objections to the recommendations at this stage. Especially should this apply to a gentleman with such a practical knowledge as the member for Collie, who knows so much of the public service. The matter should be left over for a time. The hon. member should have taken an opportunity of reading the recommendations, rather than accept the *ex parte* statements of persons interested. The law was brought into being by this Parliament; not the existing House, but the Parliament in this building. It is the law under which the Public Service Commissioner was appointed, and if we pass such an Act, I say by all means let us give it a trial and see what can be done. If the recommendations of the Commissioner are such that the Government cannot see their way to agree to the proposals, or they do not entirely agree, an opportunity is open to them to arrange for the appointment of an appeal board, when those who may be dissatisfied will have an opportunity of appearing before the board and putting forward their special cases. No one had a stronger objection to the Bill than I had. I saw almost eye to eye with my friends in Opposition in that respect. I do think that the departments and the Railway Department or any large department can be better managed under Ministerial control. But I do say that the Opposition members, who were then in power, introduced the Bill. They were, in a sense, compelled to bring it forward; and though to-night we have heard some recrimination from the member for Mt. Leonora

(Mr. Lynch) because the Governor's Speech is, he says, a reflection of the measures introduced by the Opposition, we may say that the Opposition when in power evidently thought it right to introduce the Public Service Bill, which ultimately passed both Houses and is to-day the law of the land. If Opposition members do not believe in the Act, why did they introduce it? However, it is now the law; and, I say, let us give it a fair trial. Give the Commissioner an opportunity of showing what he can do. If, after exhausting all means at the disposal of the Government under the Act, no improvement can be got out of it, then let it be amended; but do not try to wreck the Act at this stage, do not try to bring about confusion; but if the Act is found to be unworkable, let us see what can be done to make it workable. We have gone to the expense of providing this Commissioner with a salary of £800 a year, together with the charges consequent on the establishment of his office. We knew what to expect; and I cannot see what he could expect him to do except make the recommendations he has made. He has evidently made them in good faith. During the four and a-half years for which I was Minister for Works he was Under Secretary in that department. He was also for some years previously an officer in the Government service. He has had a long experience, and many opportunities of showing his qualifications as an administrator. He has in certain respects done well, and has a good knowledge of the public service generally. If someone from the Eastern States had been selected, and had made the same recommendations, probably they would have met with the same reception. But the civil servants' objections to the recommendations have probably been intensified by the knowledge that the Commissioner was formerly one of themselves. He has risen in the service to this appointment. After all, it is not the individual we have to consider, but the recommendations which he has made; and I certainly feel that fair play should be shown to that officer, and a proper administration of the Act brought about. Speaking of the public service generally, I think those who know of my past administration will recognise that I always endeavoured

to be fair. One of the greatest difficulties I contended with in my day was the sweeping retrenchment in the Works Department. In 1898, during a time of depression, the department consisted of 620 officers, and the number was reduced in 15 months to some 320—a reduction of over 300 men. During that time, the present Commissioner, then Under Secretary, was most helpful in bringing about that reduction, upon lines which, though causing difficulty to individuals, a difficulty we tried to minimise, were highly beneficial to the department generally; and I will ask the country whether there was much friction. The retrenchment was effected in the best possible manner. There was necessity for retrenchment, and it was carried out satisfactorily to the country. I am sorry to say that though promises were made of retrenchment in other departments, the Works Department was made the scapegoat. It had the courage to persist in reducing expenditure; but other departments were not prepared to follow its example. However, that is beside the question; but my desire is to see a fair classification and the service fairly dealt with. There are in the service many loyal and worthy officers, and there are, too, many juniors who are growing up to be good officers. Our desire is to have a good and loyal service. There has been much difficulty in bringing this about, because of the frequent changes of the Ministers. Parliament thought fit to pass this Act to relieve Ministers of that duty. At the time I objected, because I felt that Ministers could do the work better than a Commissioner, if they had only the strength of will to bring about the desired change. However, it was assumed that they would not; and the country thought fit to pass the Act as the best remedy in the circumstances. I think it is for us to criticise the Public Service Act fairly and justly; but to criticise it with a view to wrecking it seems to me a wrong course to adopt. I am speaking without knowledge of the intentions of the Government. A statement has been made that the matter has not yet received due consideration. But from my knowledge of the determination of the Government to do what is right, I feel that they will take up this matter as soon as they

have an opportunity, and face it manfully as it should be faced. I have left the most important subject to the last, because of its importance. It has often been stated in this House and outside that the time has arrived when a land tax should be introduced in this country. On several occasions I have spoken of a land tax. I have always opposed a land tax on the lines now proposed by the Government; that is, a tax on unimproved land values. I have opposed it because I think the time has not yet come when such a measure should be introduced; though if the necessity does arise, we must of course do something to raise revenue. On many occasions members on the Government side of the House have said that the tax is needed to burst up large estates. I will give Opposition members credit for stating that their object is to impose a tax on unimproved land values. However, the Government have decided to introduce such a measure. Though I might make these remarks when the Bill is introduced, yet in my strong desire to place my views before the House, perhaps with the object of endeavouring to modify the Bill in some directions, or if possible to prevent its introduction, I make them to-night feeling that in doing so I am acting in the best interests of the country. The Premier, to whom I give every credit for earnestness and honesty of purpose, stated in his policy speech that he intended introducing such a Bill. I think that many of his political and personal friends were under the impression that it would be a Bill to burst up the large estates by a tax on unimproved lands. However, it has now been announced that the tax is to be on unimproved land values. I should like to say there seems to be much misconception as to the meaning of this phrase. There is no misconception in the minds of those who have seriously studied the subject, but there is a general misconception in the minds of others. When the member for North Perth (Mr. Brebber) spoke last night, I heard him say something regarding which I should like to disabuse his mind. He stated then that a tax on unimproved land values would be imposed in this fashion. Say that land cost 10s. per acre, and that improvements are put on it to the value of £2 per acre; 'he valuer would come along, take the

value as the amount paid for the land and the added improvements as £2 10s. per acre; he would deduct £2 as the cost of the improvements, and thus the tax would be payable on the original value only. The New Zealand Act shows that the land tax is assessed on the unimproved value only, and not on improvements. My authority goes on to state that the valuations for the land tax are made by a permanent staff of expert valuers, and assessment rolls are supplied by the Government valuation of the Lands Department. A tax on unimproved land values is a tax on land after it is valued by permanent officials, with the improvements deducted. It is different from a tax on unimproved land. To confound the two is most misleading. People like to think that this will be a tax on unimproved lands; but they will find it is nothing of the sort; they will have to pay a tax on the increased value of land. And that is why the tax will affect so seriously, not only the people of Perth and Fremantle, but of all the larger centres. It will affect the people in the country districts also, who have done so much work in this country and proved the value of their estates; for they are about to be taxed in respect of the proceeds of their industry. [LABOUR MEMBERS: No.] I will show you why. If they had not built up their estates by their industry, the estates would have remained valueless. When I and people like me started in the Southern District as pioneers, anyone could have bought the whole of the land at 10s. per acre. We bought it at that, and deducting the improvements and favourable position, the unimproved value is now £2 per acre in certain places. That is the application of the principle. That is what I wish the people of the country to understand; and none understand it better than the Government who are preparing this measure. At this stage of the country's development it is not wise, it is most impolitic, to bring in such a measure as a Land Tax Bill. If it were for the purpose of bursting up large estates, and if we could reach these large estates by means of taxation, then perhaps we should agree to the Bill. But there seems to be a highly mistaken idea regard-

ing the number of large estates in this country. The large estates here are very few compared with those in the Eastern parts of Australia. With the exception of about four or five which I know, there are very few estates of over 15,000 acres. There are not many over 10,000 acres, and the greater number will range from 1,000 to 10,000 acres. The reason given for the Bill—to burst up large estates—is a very good reason; but the principle is difficult of application. I have always done my best to induce the owners of these estates to subdivide them. With a few exceptions, I think most of them are doing so, and trying as hard as owners of smaller estates to develop their properties. We must be careful. It is not because the application of this principle should be deferred for all time, but it should be deferred for the present, and I will say why. It seems incongruous to me. With 35,000,000 acres of land available, we are trying to attract settlement; we are offering the land to the world; we are issuing pamphlets to the world setting forth the conditions, and we have told the people that this land is free from a land tax. It will take a long time for a denial to reach those people, and it will have a very detrimental effect on the country. We should think twice before we introduce such a tax. That is one of the great objections I have. Another objection I have to it is the cost of administration, for in a country so sparsely settled as this is it will be difficult to arrive at a proper valuation. There are a thousand and one things that will have to be done. A tax of this kind would be vicious in the extreme, costly to the country, and we should not realise the amount of money which it is expected would be realised by the Government. I want to deal with the matter from a revenue standpoint. It is said, rightly too, that we must have revenue, and it is said this is the best means of procuring it. I differ from the Government in that respect. I feel that it is not the best means of producing that revenue. I will bring them back to the words of the Premier himself. He stated that the Government intended to economise in every direction. The Governor's Speech is said to be very indefinite; I am not going to re-echo those words, but I say

it might have been more definite in many directions. I will say this in defence of the Government, knowing something of the time it takes to prepare matters for the House and the short time the Government had at their disposal, that every allowance should be made for shortcomings in that direction. The Government should have taken farther opportunity of looking into the affairs of the country more closely. Although I recognise that some members in this Government were in the previous Government, still, with their evident determination to do well, they have not had the time to look into the affairs, therefore we should make every allowance in that respect. Perhaps this is a defence on their behalf. They have not yet had an opportunity of looking into the finances of the country to justify the bringing forward of a tax of this kind. Let them exhaust every means within their power, let them look into all the affairs of the State, and see whether they can cut down and save and carry on for the next two or three years, with a deficit if necessary. Even if it reached half a million, that would be better than introducing a land tax at this stage. If the Government adopted this course I do not believe the deficit would reach £250,000. With the success which I know will result from the energy the Government will exert on the affairs of the country and the development that will follow, we shall see a better state of affairs. I say we do not require this tax. It is easy to condemn and make assertions, and it will be expected that I should give some reasons why I make such statements, and why I feel that revenue can be raised in other directions. In regard to economic administration I feel there are so many ways in which we can save. There is one big item, that of "Contingencies," which has appeared on every Estimates. I perhaps have been taken to task more than any other Minister in the House over that item. It appeared in my day and it appears today. It appeared in the days when we were moving ahead with a rapid rate of progress and we had not much time to stop it; when we had to carry on the affairs of the country rapidly because of the exigencies of the time. Now we are in a more normal state, and we have an

opportunity of doing something in that direction. There is a vast establishment—the Printing Department—which costs something like £38,000 a year. I think a reduction could be made in stationery and printing, and in other items which we have brought before us, not only in the public offices, but in connection with parliamentary work. I shall be told that if we want to assist the country we must have revenue. I have spoken very often of the opening up of roads. There are what I call colonization roads—roads opening up the country to get people on to the land, not only in connection with the agricultural industry, but in connection with other industries. The vote for roads outside contingencies has been £100,000 a year. I think that instead of increasing our vote we should insist, as the Government have already done, upon the roads boards taxing themselves where it can be done without perhaps inflicting hardships on the early settlers as they go on to the land. A notice has been issued, that the boards shall tax themselves to the extent of 9d. in the £, or 1½d. on the unimproved value. I know that has been resented in certain directions. The people in the country will be affected by the tax, but they will be quite prepared to accede to the direction, I may call it, of the Government, because I think the Government have taken a strong course in that matter. Perhaps it was right in certain cases, and will save the country adding more money to the roads vote than last year. I would cut down the grants to municipalities. The vote is too much. Grants have grown quite abnormally. We should cut the municipal subsidies down, and make the towns tax themselves to carry out the improvements to their towns. There are specific instances where we should make an allowance, and I would vote £25,000 for that. On this item I would save £50,000. The members of the Opposition when in power were equally to blame with other Governments in this direction. We in our day were not to blame. We did not make the vote so high. It has grown little by little until it has reached the present figure. There is one other matter—perhaps it is a dangerous topic to touch upon—in regard to the railways. There has been no stronger advocate than

myself for the reduction of rates on the carriage of agricultural produce and timber, and what I may term the products of the local industries. But I think that we could, without impairing the success of these industries, in the rates. There are articles of luxury carried on the railways, and other things, that are perhaps not so necessary for the well-being of the people or the development of the country that could bear a higher rate than they do to-day. They could be moved from the first to the second-class rate, and from second to third-class, and so on. The matter requires careful consideration. Without increasing the cost on timber, agricultural or mining machinery, if the Commissioner were consulted the Government could raise from £40,000 to £50,000 easily in the way I have indicated.

MR. HOEAN: Did not the hon. member think of that when he was Commissioner of Railways for five years?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: If my table had been allowed to remain as I left it—it was the best table ever produced in this State—we should to-day have been reaping a revenue of £230,000 more than we get to-day. The member for North Fremantle knows of the changes made in that table. We took 14 per cent. off at one time, and it need not have been taken off, but it was taken off because of the representations made in different directions for a reduction of rates generally. I say as one who has lots of goods carried over the railways, and who knows what is carried, that the bulk of the money went into the pockets of the traders, and did not affect the people concerned. It was the same when the duty was taken off cattle years ago, when the duty was reduced by £1 a head. The next morning in town several butchers said publicly that it would mean £15,000 in their pockets. That shows what a reduction does in some cases when that reduction is made without due forethought. That was carried out by my esteemed friend Sir John Forrest, with his desire to increase the advantages to the northern settlers. It did not do them much good, the consumers got little advantage, but the butcher got a great deal out of it and the revenue suffered. It is said because of the great loss of the revenue con-



sequent on the cessation of duties between the Eastern States and this State that we shall suffer very considerably. We shall suffer if we take this year's estimate of £78,000 by that amount next year. That is a large sum to lose, but it is not large in comparison with the income of the country, for we will make it up in other directions. We are prepared for that in a measure. We look back to the previous four years. The first year the amount available to us was £201,000; the second year it was £233,000; the third £196,000, and the next year £142,000. Although each year it was reduced one-fifth, the difference between the third and second was only a matter of £7,000, but it was more the first year. That was accounted for by the increased population and the increased trade of the country. A future increased tariff is in the air. Last year we imported goods from over sea on which we paid duty to the extent of a million sterling; and if we do the same under a protective tariff increased say 5 per cent., it means £50,000, or if 10 per cent., it means £100,000. In a year or two we shall have a more protective tariff than to-day. After a time we shall not continue to import these things because we shall manufacture them here; but up to the second or third year the revenue from foreign imports must improve, and will more than compensate in a year or two for the loss we sustain under the sliding scale. That is all I wish to say on this matter. I again urge on the Government and on the members of this House seriously to consider the question between this time and the time the Bill will be introduced; and look at it from all its standpoints. I will sum up my objections. My first objection is that it is a very bad advertisement for this country under present conditions. We are making good progress, and although I have heard it stated that the progress made in land development is not what it should be, taking into consideration the large areas of land alienated and in process of alienation, I would, in defence of the people engaged upon the land, say that the large quantity taken up during the last three years goes to show that improvements *pro rata* upon this land could not be carried out at a much more rapid rate, and they are very

encouraging. The people who have carried them out deserve credit for doing so. Then, when it comes to the question of revenue, I think that when the Government have had an opportunity of going thoroughly into the question, they will see they can avoid bringing in a Bill. They can also, I think, when they become more conversant with the duties of their offices, see their way to save in other directions. They have no mean task to perform. They will have great opportunities of doing good for this country. They will have a great deal of trouble while they are doing it in different directions, but knowing them as I do, as men of strong will, men of determination to do their duty, I say that they will not shrink from it and will do all they can to economise wherever possible. I say unreservedly, and with a knowledge of the interests of the country and a knowledge of its people, that it will be most disastrous at this stage to introduce such a measure. I have much pleasure in concluding my remarks by again saying I wish in every sincerity that this new order of things—and I look upon it as a new order of things—will be the commencement of a new era in this State, and that we shall see the last of this unrestfulness, and shall settle down to the true and recognised rules of parliamentary usefulness, with one desire only—not to go in for the ins and outs, but for that satisfaction which will make this country a country which cannot be, and has not been, spoiled—although it has had so many political changes—because of its great industries and resources.

MR. H. BROWN (Perth) : I do not intend to say very much on this Address-in-Reply, but I would first like to congratulate the Premier on attaining to the high position he has now reached. I was absent from the State during the elections, and only in the last few days have I read the criticisms the Ministers have given each other during their electioneering speeches. I trust that now they are sitting side by side they will work together and give our Premier that loyal support which the party expects them to do. We have heard a lot spoken here to-night, or at least within the last few days, in abuse of Mr. Rason. No one regrets more than I do—and I think the

majority of the party—that Mr. Rason has given up the Premiership; and I would tell the Opposition that up to a certain point Mr. Rason was most open and candid with his party. He wanted the Agent Generalship, and he has got it, and no doubt the wishes of the party as to the leader they required were also conveyed to Mr. Rason. That is the point at which I wish to leave Mr. Rason. After knowing the expressed wishes of the party, there is no doubt—and it has been rumoured and the whole of our party knew it—he was approached, and through that approaching he decided to send for Mr. Wilson, knowing full well that, I will not say all but a majority of the party was in favour of the present occupant of the office.

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER:** Who approached him?

**MR. H. BROWN:** Let the person answer in the House who approached him. The legislation that is proposed to be adopted by this party must be gratifying to our friends on the opposite side, because I am certain that had the Political Labour Party introduced this platform, nine out of every ten on this side would have torn it to pieces for all they were worth.

**MR. SCADDAN:** Open confession is good for the soul.

**MR. H. BROWN:** I have often sat with the majority of the members of this party whilst the Labour party were in office, and heard them whine and cry practically at having to sit by and see the Bills brought in and carried by that party. After all that criticism which the Labour party was subjected to on the Bills they introduced, do we see in the policy of this Ministry any attempt to repeal any one of those measures? One Act that has given a great deal of dissatisfaction in this State, at all events, not only to the employers but to the employees, is the Arbitration Act. We have seen during the past year or two where the employees have stated that they would rather trust the employer than the Court; therefore, if it is not good enough for the employees, why not repeal it? We have seen that it has not prevented what the majority of this House thought it would, that is strikes—[**MEMBER:** It has prevented some]—because we have seen on the goldfields where an award has gone against the party the members

of that party have simply laid down their tools and sought pastures new.

**MR. BOLTON:** Would you support an amendment of that measure?

**MR. H. BROWN:** Certainly I would make it workable. With reference also to the Public Service Bill that was brought in by our friends when they were on the Treasury benches, we have certainly had a report here given by the Public Service Commissioner which has afforded very little satisfaction to the service at present. In those recommendations not a word have we had as to whether the service is overmanned or not; and I say without hesitation that the only gentlemen who would be able to give that opinion, and would have done equally as good work as the Commissioner, are the under-secretaries of the various departments.

**MR. HORAN:** Why did you not express that opinion when the Bill was before the House?

**MR. H. BROWN:** When the Bill was before the House the civil servants themselves said they were perfectly satisfied with it; but I believe the Act does not go far enough to allow these recommendations which the Commissioner has made to take effect. We find various officials getting large salaries, and there are suggested reductions; but instead of being able to reduce those officers, some officers are simply transferred to other appointments carrying with them the large salaries allocated to them. Also, with reference to the railways, there is no mention at all of an amendment of the Railways Act. I say get as good a Commissioner as you can, and with the present Railways Act no one can make a success of the system. You want to get the best man you possibly can for your railways, and give him a free hand to run them as he would his own business.

**MR. HORAN:** He has too free a hand already.

**MR. H. BROWN:** In reference to this policy, I certainly am not going to oppose the Ministry for the sake of being against them, but I shall not sink what I think is right for the sake of party. On those Bills that I can support I will give my assistance, more especially in regard to a promised Municipalities Bill, and with the little know-

ledge gained during the seven years of my municipal life it will be my endeavour to assist the party to make the Bill as workable as possible. My reason for objecting to portion of the policy of this Government is practically that it is a goldfields and country policy as against the cities. The procedure practically is not new: it is practically done by the majority of Ministries. We find sops promised practically all over the State. We see bores for the North-West, a dock for Fremantle, stock routes everywhere, spur lines in the country districts, a unanimous water supply all over the goldfields.

**MR. SCADDAN:** Sewerage for Perth.

**MR. H. BROWN:** For the city of Perth there is a promise with regard to sewerage. We have to pay indirectly for what members call national works, and we are to be taxed not only for these works, but directly for the only gift practically that this Ministry proposes to make us.

**LABOUR MEMBER:** You think Perth should be represented in the Ministry.

**MR. H. BROWN:** I saw by the papers that I think the member for North Perth (Mr. Brebber) and the member for Balkatta (Mr. Veryard) were mentioned as probable members. The wonder to me is whether this team which has been got together now intends pulling together. We found last session of Parliament, at all events, the Attorney General speaking and voting against spur railways—[**MR. TROY:** Hear, hear]—and advocating the line to Norseman and the line from Magnet to Black Range.

**MR. TROY:** Hear, hear.

**MR. HOEAN:** Times have changed, you know.

**MR. H. BROWN:** With reference to the feeling that is against the city, I am told that the Attorney-General considers that towns are parasites on the country, and we are also told by him—in spite of the large deficit each year on the goldfields water scheme—that if a water and sewerage scheme for Perth is to be provided, the municipal authorities should meet all interest on the cost of construction, and expenses. We also know that the Colonial Secretary intended if he could to deprive the city of the gift of land Mr. Rason so kindly gave to the

city of Perth. We also know the attitude not only of the present Minister for Works, but also of the late Minister for Works, with reference to keeping the pipe contract by day labour in Fremantle. [**LABOUR MEMBERS:** Hear, hear.] I am glad members agree with that. At all events we know that not many months ago a deputation from the Chamber of Manufactures waited on the Minister for Works to urge that they at all events should have some voice in the tendering for the manufacture of pipes for our Perth water scheme. We were told by Mr. Wilson that if the pipes could be manufactured cheaper by contract than by his own department he was willing to do it.

**MR. SCADDAN:** And gave the price of his department away when he said it, too.

**MR. H. BROWN:** We also find that through the continuance of the pipe contract in Fremantle we are penalised to the extent of from £1 3s. to £1 5s. a ton for those pipes that are now being laid down in the city of Perth. A contract was called for a certain quantity of pipes, and the lowest tenderers were Messrs. Monteath and Clemenger—let the late Minister for Works deny it—and in spite of his promise to that Chamber of Manufactures, a great portion of these pipes was given to the workshops in Fremantle.

**MR. BOLTON:** He did not promise the lowest tenderers, did he?

**MR. H. BROWN:** The late Minister for Works promised the deputation that if he knew a ring was being formed he would not hesitate to use Government funds to break it up; but if he saw that fair and reasonable tenders were being submitted and they could compete with his own department, he would be prepared to accept them. I say again that for a quantity of pipes tenders were called a few months ago and Monteath and Clemenger were the lowest tenderers. There were threats from some of the Fremantle members of going over. I say without fear of refutation that one Fremantle member informed me—[**MEMBER:** Who?]**—the late Mr. Diamond, that some of the Fremantle members had threatened to withdraw support from the Government if the day-labour pipe works were stopped at Fremantle. [THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** No.] Well, it is the case; and the present Minister for

Works is no more a day-labour man than the majority of this House; but because it would affect the town of Fremantle he naturally fought for the retention of the day-labour system and the keeping of these pipe works in Fremantle, though it is adding day by day to the cost of the metropolitan water scheme. With reference to the promised Perth Water and Sewerage Scheme, the sooner the citizens who have to pay for it have a voice in the control of the expenditure the better. We all hear the platitudes of members on both sides of the House that there should be no taxation without representation, and we all know the extravagant methods employed by the Works Department, and that in consequence this scheme will be overloaded. That extravagance was evidenced by the fact that the Railways objected strongly to the Works Department constructing their stations, and absolutely refused to allow them to do so. If the Perth citizens have to bear the huge taxation of this scheme, they should certainly have a voice in its construction. Up to now, nearly £30,000 has been expended in plans. During the last year they made a spurt and spent £17,000. That is a terrible admission on a work that is estimated to cost £112,000, and not a pipe laid nor any work started. The engineer stated distinctly in the Town Hall that they had put on a spurt in the last 12 months, and in plans and surveys alone had spent £17,000 on the Perth sewerage scheme. That admission shows the extravagance of this department.

MR. TAYLOR: If you had let the people know that before the recent elections, not one of the Ministers would have been returned.

MR. H. BROWN: There is not an engineer in the Government who has ever carried out a septic tank scheme of sewerage. While in Sydney I met Dr. McKellar, and read the evidence he gave before the commission in Sydney. He said that no man, unless he has had considerable experience, should be allowed to construct or manage a septic tank system. In this connection we had the remarks made by the present Attorney General last year, when he favoured the council constructing the work. I am not like the member for North Perth (Mr. Brebber) with reference to the land tax.

That hon. member says that when it comes on for discussion, he will consider what he will do. I tell the Premier now that I will oppose it all I can. We have had a few words of instruction here to-night from the member for Katanning as to the meaning of unimproved land values. If the Premier told us distinctly that it is a land tax he was introducing, he would be more correct. There are references made in the papers that it is intended to place a tax of one penny in the £ on the unimproved values. If so, it would mean 10d. in the £ that my electors would have to pay, as against 1s. 6d. rate paid now. Last Parliament when the Municipal Bill came up, I moved for a return of the rating on unimproved land values, and it was demonstrated that to get the same revenue as we receive in Perth from a rate of 1s. 6d. in the £ on the rental value of property, a rate of one penny and one-sixteenth on unimproved values would be all that was needed. Consequently, if this scheme as foreshadowed is introduced, it will be equal to 10d. in the £ on the annual values in the city of Perth; and the money raised will be spent principally in the country and on the gold-fields. I do not believe that the country land can stand the tax where they have the present direct taxation. During my recent visit to New South Wales, I found that till now every road or bridge outside the corporations has been constructed by the Government, and that now there is no local form of government outside those corporations; but while I was there, I procured a Shires Council Bill which was introduced last session of Parliament. Three gentlemen from each shire were nominated to compile rolls and form themselves into shire councils. One of the provisions of the Bill was that those country districts should rate themselves at not less than 1d. nor more than 2d. in the £, and immediately following that was the proviso that, so soon as a local tax was introduced, the land tax which had been in vogue for some time would absolutely cease. In New South Wales they realise that at all events the country lands cannot afford to be taxed for local and also for national works. We know full well that the towns outside Perth and Fremantle would bear a very small proportion of this particular tax.

In the city the land is practically worth 15 to 20 years' purchase as against three to four years in the majority of the goldfields districts. Therefore the unimproved value of that goldfields land would be infinitesimal compared with that of the larger and older cities. We hear that this unimproved land values tax is practically to burst up large estates, as the member for Katanning said; but in New South Wales they found that it had not the slightest effect in so doing, and that the owners of the larger estates were the people who were the better able to pay the tax. If taxation is needed at all, the fairest and most equitable would be an income tax. Why is this land tax proposed to be raised at all? We are simply told, "Because of our falling revenue; mainly through our entering Federation." Mr. Rason, speaking at Midland Junction made some reference to secession; and I think that if we are to be ruined through entering into the Commonwealth, the sooner some step is taken in that direction the better it will be for the State. Year after year our revenue has fallen owing to the duties being taken off, and can a single member point to any article of food that has become cheaper through the duty having been taken off?

MR. TAYLOR: Whose fault is that? The people you represent; the parasites, the nonproducers.

MR. H. BROWN: As the member for Katanning has said, there can be reductions made in the various departments, and I think one of the chief is the Lands Department. We find that the cost of the Lands Department has gone up from 40 per cent. of its revenue in 1897 to 75 per cent. of its revenue in 1904. The cost of cutting up and disposing of the Midland Railway Company's land is about 10 per cent., whereas the cost to the Lands Department for disposing of land is 75 per cent. of the revenue received. In 1897 the revenue of the Lands Department was £161,924, and the expenditure £69,000. In 1898 the revenue was £171,000 with an expenditure of £77,000. In 1903 the revenue was £164,000 with an expenditure of £88,000, and in 1904 the revenue was £183,000 with an expenditure of £138,000. In 1903 the cost was 50 per cent., and in 1904 it was 75 per cent. A greater

revenue was collected in 1898 by £7,000 or £8,000 than in 1903, and the cost was 45 per cent. as against 50 per cent. We know at that time the accountancy branch was managed by four persons; at the present time I am informed on good authority that there are over 27 officers in that branch, and they are still applying for more. I think no one has reaped a greater benefit—no doubt through his industry—from the expenditure of Government money in the construction of railways than the member for Katanning has—I mean indirectly, and he will also receive great assistance by the projected spur lines.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: On a point of order, I would like to know how the hon. member arrives at the conclusion that I received indirect advantages from the construction of railways and the expenditure of public money. I would like the hon. member to explain.

MR. H. BROWN: It is no detriment to the member for Katanning. I say the building of railways through the properties the hon. member has acquired has benefited him indirectly, also the construction of the spur lines in that district will benefit the member indirectly.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: I do not think the hon. member should make these accusations. I have had many accusations made against me in my time, but I may say the Great Southern Railway was built through that country before I started there, and as far as railways being built through since, none have been built while I have occupied my property.

MR. H. BROWN: I am not making a charge against the member for Katanning. I wish to be clear on that point. The argument I use is against the land tax for the cities for the benefit of the country districts, and I say the member for Katanning, who represents a country districts, has received indirectly a great deal of wealth by the construction of railways through his properties, and that he will also receive farther benefit by the construction of spur lines which the towns by the land taxation will have to bear.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member misunderstands the member for Katanning. I understand him distinctly, and I know it from my own knowledge

that the member for Katanning has not received any benefits by railways being built through his property, nor has any line been built since he has acquired his property.

MR. H. BROWN: I admit that. Through the acquiring of these properties and through the projected spur lines to be run through the district, Mr. Piesse does not say that his properties are not being improved. I do not impute any motives. With reference to the reduction of the franchise for the Upper House, I do not intend to vote for it, and I say if the proposal had been introduced by a Labour Government nine-tenths of the members now on the Government side would have been voting against it.

MR. BATH: You need not be afraid. They do not believe in it.

MR. H. BROWN: I understand, with the hon. member, that the Government do not mean to have it carried, but if the proposal is carried the Government hope it will be thrown out in another House. They are not sincere in their proposals. I think it will be carried, the same as the land tax, with the assistance of the members opposite. If the Government reduce the franchise to £15 it will make very little difference. We do not hear the country agitating for this particular reduction. We find that in New South Wales a far worse system prevails. There they have a nominee House with no payment. In Victoria they have an elective House with a £20 franchise. In South Australia a similar franchise exists to our own, and with a Labour Premier there is no reference to a reduction of the franchise. If the franchise is giving satisfaction there, why in a new country advance beyond the limits of the older Eastern States. With reference to the timber industry, I think the time and attention given to that matter by Mr. A. J. Wilson, who has visited the Eastern States, should be commended. The Government should be careful before they consider a reduction of freights to the timber companies. I think reports should be obtained as to what over-loaded capital these companies carry, and if it is found even without the over-loading of these companies no dividends can be paid to the ordinary shareholders, then and only then should it be necessary for

the Government to reduce the railway freights. With reference to the Midland Railway Company I received certain replies the other day, and I do not know way the Government, or any Government, should be bound to guarantee the title to the land sold. If we get revenue from that particular company, large mortgages exist behind us, and we have to pay the large mortgages off before we can give a title to the present purchasers. Coming back to local matters, I say the assistance Perth has received during the last two or three years has been very little. I have been asked every year what particular work was necessary for Perth, and the only one that I have pressed has been the construction of the Beaufort Street Bridge. The Railway Department have practically severed the city. That would never have been allowed if the railway had been constructed by a private company. All railways in the old country have to provide the same means of communication that exist before a railway is built. It is asking no favour from the Government to urge what Perth should have—good approaches each side of the city, and not have the city severed. I intend to vote against the particular matters which I have mentioned. I shall not give a factious opposition, but shall assist the Government to pass measures which in my opinion are worthy of support.

On motion by MR. BUTCHER, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 26 minutes past 9 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

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