

be more humane than we have been in the past; we should not treat them like common white criminals, but we should try and teach them as we would teach children, for, after all, they are children both by nature and habit. The Government should establish plantations at considerable distances from the large centres—to establish them in towns would be fatal for the working out of the system. At these plantations rubber trees, cotton plants, and tropical fruits could be grown, and after a while the Government would be able to make the control of the aborigines a self-supporting scheme. That would be the class of labour that the aborigines would have the least objection to. It goes to a man's heart now to see the natives led through the streets chained to one another with a hopeless, dejected look in their countenances. The suggestions I have made, if carried out, would do something to mitigate the conditions of the aborigines. I know that it is a very dangerous subject for a member for a northern part of the State to touch upon; but the feelings of humanity cannot be repressed by such a consideration. I trust that the Colonial Secretary will soon bring the matter under the notice of the Minister for Agriculture. I have already spoken to the Honorary Minister about it, also to Mr. Despeissis, the expert of the Department, and I have their sympathy in the matter. If this innovation in the treatment of the aborigines is carried out it will do something to alleviate the terrible misery we are inflicting, if indirectly, on a suffering race. I am sorry that I have spoken much longer than I had intended. In conclusion, I beg to move the adoption of the following Address in reply to the Speech of His Excellency:—

To His Excellency Admiral Sir Frederick George Denham Bedford, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Governor in and over the State of Western Australia and its Dependencies, etc., etc.

May it Please Your Excellency,—

We the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express

our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD (Metropolitan-Suburban): At this juncture, I beg formally to second the motion moved by Mr. Pennefather.

On motion by the Hon. W. Maley, debate adjourned until the next sitting.

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the Colonial Secretary, the House adjourned until the next Tuesday afternoon at 4.30 o'clock.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 4th July, 1907.

	PAGE
Opening of Third Session	10
Papers Presented	10
Bill (to assert privilege): "Public Education Amendment, 1st."	11
Address-in-Reply (debate), Motion to adopt	11

OPENING OF THIRD SESSION.

The Legislative Assembly met at three o'clock 'p.m., pursuant to Proclamation, which was read by the Clerk.

In obedience to summons, Mr. Speaker (Hon. T. F. Quinlan) and hon. members proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber; and having heard His Excellency deliver the opening Speech (*vide* Council report, *ante*), they returned to the Assembly Chamber. Mr. Speaker reported to the House what had been done.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Government Labour Bureau—Report of Superintendent for 1906; 2, Regulations for the Sharks Bay Pearl Shell Fishery; 3, By-laws passed by the Municipalities of Beverley, Boulder, Claremont, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Leonora, Perth, South Perth, Subiaco, and Victoria Park; 4, Department of Mines—Report for 1906; 5, Regulations under the Inspection of

Machinery Act; 6, Goldmining Leases held under Amalgamation; 7, Regulations of Government Railways for Jet-ties, Wharfage Rates, and Berthing Dues; 8, By-law and Regulations of Government Railways; 9, Reports and Returns of Government Railways; 10, Public Works Department—Report for six months ended 30th June, 1906.

BILL—PUBLIC EDUCATION AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Premier (to assert privilege), and read a first time.

NOTICES.

Several notices were given for the next sitting of the House.

DEBATE—ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Motion to Adopt.

Mr. A. MALE (Kimberley) said: I beg to move the adoption of the following Address in reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor:—

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign, and to thank your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

Before dealing with His Excellency's Speech, I should like to express my pleasure at seeing you, Mr. Speaker, again in the Chair and ready to perform the onerous duties which devolve upon you. It is not my intention to indulge in a long speech, but simply to touch a few points which appear to be of interest. The Speech itself is more or less a *résumé* of the Premier's policy speech at Bunbury; and though it contains nothing of a very startling nature, it outlines a practical policy. It is pleasing to be able to record the fact that the unfortunate dispute in the timber industry has now been happily terminated; and the hope expressed that the country may look forward to an extended term of peace in connection with that important industry will, I trust, be realised. It is gratifying also to be able to record at the beginning of our session

the fact that throughout the State, from the far northern to the southern districts, we have had a bountiful supply of rain, making cheerful the prospects of our agricultural and pastoral industries. As one of the too few members who represent the northern districts of the State I may perhaps be excused if I devote most of my speech to matters which more particularly concern the North, leaving other matters to members who know more of them than I. In reviewing the remarks I made on the last Address-in-reply I find I regretted the fact that no member of the present Ministry was a representative of the North, and that no Minister had any knowledge of the North as a whole, or of any area farther north than Geraldton. But it is gratifying to find that this defect has been remedied, and that two Ministers—the Treasurer (Hon. Frank Wilson) and the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory)—have taken opportunity during the recess to visit the Far North. Perhaps the more important visit was that of the Minister for Mines, who made a trip up the coast, and an overland journey from Port Hedland to Roebourne, during which he saw the wonderful resources of the country. The reports of that trip have doubtless been read with interest by every member of the community, more especially as it was felt that the fate of the North largely depended on the result, and rested in the hands of the Minister. It appears to me that the Cinderella of Western Australia, the neglected portion, is now beginning to be appreciated. Even as the members of the Parliamentary party which made the same journey last year came back greatly surprised, so has the Minister returned filled with enthusiasm for the resources of the North-West. That district, so long regarded as a kind of never-never country filled with men of more or less desperate character, is now referred to in our newspapers as the great North-West; and to the development of its resources we are now beginning to look for relief from the depression in our southern districts. If the Ministry have only the courage of their convictions, and will

carry out the intentions displayed in His Excellency's Speech and in the Premier's policy speech at Bunbury, then I think they may be justly regarded as the first Ministry since the reign of Sir John Forrest who have fully appreciated the duties devolving upon them, and they may hereafter be remembered as the great North-West Ministry. Perhaps the most admirable paragraph in the Speech is that expressing a determination to obtain authority to construct the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway. The Bill for that purpose will, I think, be the most popular plank in the Ministerial platform. This is not the right time for discussing such contentious details as route and gauge, but I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that if the Bill is introduced it will receive the support of all sections of the House. In addition to the projected railway, the Government promise to give attention to the great highway from the North, the ocean. The much and long-needed lights necessary for the protection of life and shipping along the coast are to be provided in the form of three light-houses which, I believe, are to be constructed at an early date. And I may draw attention to the fact that the survey of that coast is quite as necessary as its lighting. Though no mention of this is made in the Speech, the Premier has stated that the matter is receiving attention, and that negotiations are already proceeding with the Admiralty, so that the survey may be completed. The survey, quite as much as the lighting, is needed for the preservation of life and of valuable property, as witness the many accidents on our coast during the past few years. In addition to these works attention is to be given to our jetties and tramways, and to shipping facilities generally from Fremantle to Wyndham; and I think I am right in saying that a systematic overhauling of each port is now in progress. And after all, when we consider the great importance of our pastoral industry, which provides the meat supply of our metropolitan and goldfields population; when we consider our great export trade in wool, and our great pearl-

ing industry which alone supplies more than half the world's demand for mother-of-pearl; when we consider the great mineral resources of the North, which are awaiting development: when we consider all these factors, we must agree that the North can justly demand from the Ministry that attention which has been so long denied. To stimulate our great pastoral industry continued encouragement is to be given to artesian boring. Of the success of that policy we already have evidence at Broome, at a point inland from Derby, and more especially in the Carnarvon district; and I trust that this policy will be carried out without any delay whatever. Again, as the Premier announced in his speech at Adelaide, assistance is to be given to encourage our meat export trade, and the Government will grant a loan of £ for £ to any company prepared to engage in that industry. What the sister States have done in this respect, surely we can do; and it seems to me that in course of time, as the southern districts become closely settled and turned into dairy farms and mixed farms, the meat supply of the metropolitan and goldfields areas will be drawn from those southern districts. Then, having lost those markets for our northern stock, and finding ourselves with increased herds, we in the North will certainly have to cultivate an export trade. Only last week, in reading the *Pastoralists' Review*, I noticed a big movement of cattle under way, 10,000 bullocks and cows having already left two stations adjoining our East Kimberley border, whilst other large drafts will shortly be on the road. The total number going to Queensland is said to be 17,000 head of stock. This is a highly regrettable matter, when we know that the natural outlet for this stock is Wyndham. Let us build up the trade that legitimately belongs to this State. Let Western Australia, and not the Eastern States, benefit by this great industry. If we wait too long we shall find that a meat export trade will be worked up at Port Darwin or another port in the Northern Territory, and we shall lose our opportunity. The meat export trade, as we know, has been the back-

bone of New Zealand. Let us make it one of our great and flourishing industries. Whilst on the subject of the North-West I would again voice a warning by urging the need for protecting our Kimberley areas against the rabbits. The present fence, which extends from Eucla in the South-East to Wallal on the Ninety-mile Beach, though protecting the pastoral country to the west of the fence, is really driving the rabbits straight into the Kimberley districts. As soon as they strike the fence they travel north as fast as they can go; and it is most important that another fence should be erected from some easterly point on the present fence, across to the South Australian border. We waited too long in the past, before protecting the southern districts; and we know the result: we have had to build two fences instead of one. This mistake must not be repeated in the North; for once the rabbits get there it will be impossible to clear them out, and we shall lose a rich inheritance impossible to replace. In the North we cannot for the present at least look forward to closer settlement to enable us to contend with rabbits; so let us act in time, or this vast territory now providing our meat supply will be a desolate waste. The coastal-development policy of the Government includes the construction of the Fremantle Dock, a work which should commend itself to every section of the House, and one which should in my opinion be constructed by the Government. When constructed, it should be handed over to the Harbour Trust, by whom it will be managed. The financial position of the State, though we have a fairly substantial deficit, is not really so bad when we consider that the shortage of revenue is largely due to the falling-off in our receipts from the Commonwealth, and to the fact that the Treasurer has been confronted with items of expenditure which could not be anticipated. On the whole, I think the Government should be congratulated because the deficit is no larger. Successful finance depends largely on the development of our resources. In his policy speech the Premier gave a fair outline of the financial position, told us the

extent of our deficit, and indicated his future financial policy. It is an acknowledged fact that the shortage in revenue must be made good. Of course, the first cry is economic administration; and that is certainly an easy cry for the man who has not the administering to do. At the same time, I believe there is great room for economy in administration, though on that point the Government are still to be congratulated, if, as the Premier states, they have effected a saving of £99,000 during the last financial year. When we compare the cost of administering our Railway Department, our Lands Department and other departments, with the cost of corresponding departments in the sister States, I certainly think we must conclude that our administrative cost is too high. Let us then in the first place look to those who are administering the public departments to effect economies. The railways alone undoubtedly give great scope for economical management, and in my opinion the determination of the Government to secure the services of a thoroughly trained man is a wise one. Let us pay a good price for a good man, and then let us look to that man to effect the necessary improvement in the management of our railways. In my opinion the system of one Commissioner is good. You cannot beat autocratic government, providing you get the right autocrat. It is not always possible to get the right man at the required time, but that man can be found. To farther adjust our finances it is admitted by most people that additional taxation is necessary. Taxation is objectionable to all of us; but at the same time we cannot continue to ask for new railways, spur lines, roads, boards, grants, jetties and other improvements unless we are prepared to pay the piper. If we insist on the Government's spending, then it is only fair that we should assist to provide the necessary funds. The most equitable form of taxation which appeals to most men is that form which taxes the other man. However, we have been promised in that direction a resurrection of the land tax, and in my opinion a land tax with proper exemptions is not an unfair tax. We are also promised a stock tax; but

as we have no very definite particulars in connection with that, it is hard to form an opinion. In my opinion its merits depend on its application. If, as the Premier states, it is for the purpose of providing rabbit-proof fences and work of a similar nature, then I am not quite sure that the tax is altogether equitable; it is not sufficiently sweeping because we must bear in mind that the rabbit-proof fence is not only constructed for the protection of our pastoral areas but also to protect our agricultural areas; and to make it an equitable tax it should go not only on the stock but on the crops as well. We are also informed that the additional taxation will not be sufficient to meet all the requirements, and the Premier suggests instituting a half per cent. sinking fund in place of the one per cent. sinking fund which is now in vogue. There has hardly been time to consider the merits of this drastic change, but at the first glance I would certainly give a word of warning and caution when interfering with a system which has been the building up of such a grand reserve fund as we have at the present time. If we go on the money markets for fresh loans and boom our strong financial position, we always resort to the argument that we have this great sinking fund to cover any depreciation that exists. What effect. I ask, will this alteration have on our credit when we go to the money markets? Because the other States have failed to build up such funds, it is no argument that we have done more than our duty in doing so; and in my opinion, in spite of our shortness of revenue and the amount of our deficit, I am still to be convinced that we are justified in adopting a course which may perhaps be detrimental to our credit. Amongst the new legislation which we are called upon to consider will be the Electoral Law Reform Bill. The Electoral Act of to-day undoubtedly needs amending, as was discovered at the last general elections; and I believe that almost every member of this House is pledged to assist in the passing of such a measure as will overcome the difficulties that were then discovered — a measure that will give to every

elector an opportunity to record his vote with the greatest facility commensurate with safety and secrecy. This alteration is, perhaps, more required in connection with our large areas in the North where the polling stations are in many cases hundreds of miles apart. There we require special postal facilities so that every man on the roll and every woman on the roll will be able to record his or her vote. Another measure we shall be asked to consider will be the Local Option Bill. This will be perhaps as contentious a measure as any that can come before the House. On the lines already indicated by the Premier there is much room for reflection without enabling us to altogether commit ourselves to any particular opinion; but the principle of local option will receive my support, while I leave myself open to consider the details of compensation. During last session a Gold Stealing Commission was appointed, the result of which showed that the statements made in connection with gold stealing were largely correct. I would now again voice the cause of the pearlers in the North and call attention to the extensive pearl stealing and illicit dealing going on in connection with that industry; and I would urge the Government to take action in that matter also. The Premier has already advised us that the Government are determined to do all possible to minimise or stop the gold stealing, and I would point out that pearl stealing can be dealt with at the same time. If the mines require this special protection, how much more must those pearlers require protection whose industry is carried on on the high seas as against mining which is carried on within a small defined area on shore? Perhaps the member of the Government who calls for more particular attention at the present time than any other Minister is the Honorary Minister, the Minister for Agriculture. For the first time in the history of the Department of Agriculture it is being raised to that position in practical politics which it deserves. (General applause.) We look to the settlement of the land for much of the future welfare and prosperity of this State. The enthusiasm of

the Minister, which is undoubted, has already been felt and its effect has been seen in the small trial shipments of frozen lamb, fruit, and other articles of production from this State; and the success of this will, I hope, lay the foundation for building up a great industry. The good results accruing from the Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Bill, which the Honorary Minister piloted through the House last session, already more than justify that measure. In the first ten years of the Bank's existence advances to £675,000 were made to settlers. Then the present Ministry came along and liberalised the conditions under which advances could be made, the result of which has been that since the new Act came into force last February, whereby the conditions were widely liberalised, applications for advances have been made in less than five months of £154,200 or an average of £7,750 per week. Since that Act came into operation 300 new accounts have been opened and the demands on the Bank have increased at least 100 per cent. The Ministry have wisely decided to encourage the dairying industry by every legitimate means, and in view of the policy of the importation of dairy stock from the Eastern States into our South-West District, we can look forward to seeing in a few years the bigger portion of our South-West District turned into one huge dairy farm, capable not only of producing the butter we require for our own State, but of building up a large export trade equal to that which is done by the other States. At present we are sending something like £2,000,000 annually to the Eastern States to enrich their enterprise, which money should be kept in this State for the prospering and enriching of our own industries. We have the soil, the climate, and the rainfall, and apparently the Government are determined that these factors shall be turned to the best possible account for the benefit of this State. While dealing with this question of land settlement, which includes the agricultural immigration policy of the Government, I should like to draw attention to the misleading and unfair remarks made by the member for Brown Hill (Mr.

Bath) in his recent speech in the Queen's Hall. He tried to bring ridicule on the Government's immigration policy, and undoubtedly showed his ignorance on the subject. He pointed out:—

“He also found in the loan expenditure an item of £2,462 for agricultural immigration up to the end of March. . . . What had been the result of the Government's immigration policy which had been carried out on borrowed money? During the first five months of this year, instead of the State having gained in population by excess of arrivals over departures, there had been an excess of 217 departures over arrivals. . . . But he wanted to point out that the loss of men of European extraction had been much greater than would appear from the figures he had quoted. The State had gained in the number of Asiatics by excess of arrivals over departures, which perhaps, they could regard as compensation for the loss of the Europeans. They had gained 21 Malays, 7 Manilamen, 36 Japanese, 51 Hindoos, 15 Javanese, and 10 Timorese. That was the magnificent immigration policy carried out on money borrowed from the British money lender. It was a very serious matter.”

And I contend it is a very serious matter when an hon. gentleman holding the responsible position of Leader of the Opposition could so absolutely mislead the public. The Premier in his policy speech advised that for the year ending 1906 there were 883 immigrants from the United Kingdom with a capital of nearly £18,000, while during the first five months of the present year 333 people arrived most of whom are farmers or men connected with farming. The hon. member has evidently been muddling up his figures. What has the number of immigrants assisted to this State from borrowed money to do with the excess of departures over arrivals? If the hon. member can be understood to mean anything, it would amount to this, that the Government vote for immigration has

had the effect of creating an excess of departures from the State over the numbers arriving into it of 217—a very silly deduction that possibly was responsible for the laughter that followed the hon. gentleman's remark. The hon. gentleman stated that the State had gained in the number of Asiatics which perhaps the people could regard as compensation for the loss of Europeans. I would point out that the excess Asiatics have nothing whatever to do with the agricultural immigration policy of the Government. These men are not imported at the expense of the State or with money borrowed from the British money-lender. As a matter of fact these men are not immigrants at all. With the exception of 51 Hindoos, who at the present time are waiting at Port Hedland for transportation to the country whence they came and who were brought to the State under special permission from the Federal Government in charge of a shipment of camels which came to the State, the men referred to by the hon. gentleman came down here to replace a similar number of men imported for the pearling grounds. These men are all employed at sea; they are signed on the ships' articles as British seamen, under the British Merchant Shipping Act; and the Federal Government hold a bond in a hundred pounds for each man, as a guarantee that he will at the termination of his agreement be deported to the place whence he came. Moreover, it is and has for some time been impossible for the number of men so employed to be increased. Yet the hon. member, without inquiring into the facts, would have the public believe that these men were brought to the State in pursuance of the agricultural immigration policy of the Government. [Interjections by Labour members.] However, to continue my remarks, I will emphasise the fact that the policy of this State, and I may say even the policy of the Commonwealth, should be a progressive land-settlement policy. Our object should be to provide England and other manufacturing countries with the foodstuffs which they require and which we can produce. Feed them with our flour, our fruit, our meats;

let them have our raw materials such as our wool and our timber. Let them do the manufacturing for the present, while we do the producing. We have the sunshine, the rain and the soil. Let us get the men and the muscle, and we have all the capital that is needed. Let us cultivate the soil and we will prosper. Let us assist the Government who are prepared to develop the resources which have been so bountifully provided by nature.

Mr. H. BROWN (Perth): I wish first to thank the Government for giving me the opportunity of seconding the motion for adoption of the Address-in-Reply, more especially as I have been known as their candid friend. Their action seems to signify that my criticisms have been fair and generous—[Labour Member: And warranted]—and possibly warranted. I am not bound as some members may be, more especially the Opposition, who have only one line of action marked out for them, and are bound to follow it. The Government are to be congratulated on having propounded so bold and vigorous a policy; and I hope they will be long enough in office to bring it to fruition. Every credit should be given them for the spirited land-settlement policy pursued for the past few years; and I say without fear of contradiction that the present Ministry have paid greater attention to land settlement than have any other Ministry in Western Australia. Much of the success is due to the noble efforts of the Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department (Hon. J. Mitchell) who has gone through the State and broken up some of the State farms which sadly needed such treatment; and I think that in a short time they will be placed on a good, sound, payable basis. We know that under Federation our manufacturing industries are practically doomed, and that to agriculture we must look for our chief source of revenue. We have done much for the agriculturist, but I think we should do much more; and I have previously advocated the clearing and fencing of land for settlers. I have another proposition with which I know

the Labour party will not agree. I would empty our gaols, and set the prisoners to work at clearing Crown lands for settlement. I know the Labour party will cry, "You are interfering with free labour." But I contend that if you were to offer free labourers the work of clearing land in the South-West, you would not get 50 in the State to undertake it. The Government could also undertake the settlement of other Crown lands—[*Mr. Walker*: With gaol-birds?] I say, with gaol-birds. The Labour party are always preaching the uplifting of humanity; and surely the prisoners in Fremantle would lead a better and possibly a healthier life in the country than where they are now, virtually wasting their time in semi-idleness. With the experience gained on Crown lands they would become settlers, and possibly very good settlers, in the future. We know that spur railways have been pushed out in all directions. Members are well aware that I voted against these lines, and I should vote against them still unless I had fuller information. I am sorry to find that the settlers concerned have not done their duty by these spur lines. We already see the settlers fighting for the reduction of freights. When these men are assisted as they have been, I think they should be prepared to bear a small share of the public burdens. I should like to refer to the good work done by the Agricultural Bank, and also to its splendid manager. We know that, under the *régime* of the present Government, it is possible for a man with scarcely any capital to go on the land and succeed. I think the storekeepers of this State deserve commendation for assisting the Government by providing such settlers with rations, which are paid for eventually out of advances made by the Agricultural Bank. But great care should be taken that too much is not advanced, and the funds of the State jeopardised. In the matter of immigration, referred to this afternoon, I think we should go slowly; that we are not quite ready to receive any great number of immigrants, but that the number could be increased if we adopted the practice of first clearing the

land. I regret to find in the Governor's Speech no mention of separation. I trust that after the experience gained by the Premier at the late Premiers' Conference, he will bring in a Message during this session, so that a referendum may be taken of the people of this State, with a view to separating from the Commonwealth. All members, even those in Opposition, will agree that our present deficit is practically attributable to our entry into Federation. [*Labour Members*: No.] I say distinctly, that is the main cause of our present deficit; and I would ask those gentlemen opposite: Now that the inter-State duties have been removed, is there a single article of food imported to this State that is cheaper now than it was under the old *régime*? [*Mr. Bath*: Scores of them.] You say, Scores of them. You cannot name a single article that is cheaper now than it was five years ago, before the duties were taken off; in addition to which we have lost the whole of our manufactures and are being flooded by the cheaper labour markets of the Eastern States. After the speeches we have had from Sir William Lyne and a gentleman named Bent who found that he had called at a place called Western Australia, I think the sooner we are separated from this wretched Federation the better. In reference to the deficit, I would like to ask who practically, in addition to Federation, are mainly responsible for it? Is it not practically every member of the present Legislature? Is there a single member of this Legislature to-day who has not always practically been pestering Ministers, every one of them, for grants for this and grants for that particular district? If members would only be loyal for one short twelvemonth when business is dull as they know it is—and I take it that at present it has never been worse, at all events in Perth—if members would only defer getting a bridge here or a road there, the deficit would be soon wiped out. [Interjection by *Mr. Scaddan*.] I am prepared to admit that the subsidies to municipalities should be the first to go. [*Mr. Scaddan*: I mean the special grants for roads about Perth.] We should do with-

out them. I say that if members were only a little generous and would stop their clamouring for grants for their particular districts—we know that in the majority of Australian States the member for the district is judged by the amount of money he can get spent in his district—the deficit would be soon wiped out. Although I am seconding the Address-in-Reply, I am not bound to the whole of the Governor's Speech. One particular feature of the Speech to which I have objection, and on which I shall vote as I did last session, is the matter of the Land Tax Bill. I am entirely in favour of a tax on unimproved land, but I am totally against a tax on unimproved land values. I am quite sure that the city of Perth, not only my own constituency but the whole of the Perth constituencies, cannot at the present time afford to pay a land tax. Within a short time the rates alone will amount to about 6s. 8d. in the pound, and on top of that we have contributions to the roads and footpaths, also the new sewerage connections that will shortly take place; and the majority of the residents of Perth have improved their properties to the utmost extent, and to do so most of them have had to mortgage very heavily. So there will be little or no profit from their land. [*Mr. Bolton*: They don't mean to pass that Bill. It will only go the same distance as last session.] The hon. member would if he had the opportunity. Some gentlemen on the Opposition side look on the owning of property as a crime. At all events—I am speaking of the electorate of the member for Subiaco—I have had proof that within the last nine months property has depreciated to the extent of nearly a third; and I am certain the tax will have the same detrimental effect on the lands in the city. Of course it is very nice for a Treasurer who is suave with his constituents to tell them in the country that the tax will not affect them and that the money is coming from the towns; but I think that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Naturally some one will ask, if one is against a land tax, what would he propose in lieu thereof? I quite agree that

there should be a very large reduction in the subsidies to municipalities and road boards; and I say that within the past few years—I do not say during the present Administration, but previously—subsidies were absolutely illegally obtained from the Government. Perth, I know, did obtain a sum of £6,000 before I entered the mayoralty and had to refund; but we find that during the last few years Northam, to the extent of £2,500 absolutely robbed the Government, while Fremantle was almost equally as bad; and I say without fear of contradiction that five-sixths of the municipalities of this State have been receiving, by falsifying their accounts, far and away more than they should have received from the Government. I say that Fremantle premeditated it and that they knew what they were doing. They absolutely reduced their health rate from 3d. to 1d. in the pound and charged portion of their health work to general revenue; and that was going on to last year. To show the insidious practice at Northam, in 1906 to raise the necessary sum for their municipality a rate of 9d. would have been sufficient, and that would have raised £1,000, ample for the requirements of the municipality; but they struck a rate of 1s. 6d. and raised a sum of £2,500, on which they received a subsidy from the Government of over £3,000, and they debited over £1,800 of their health account to general revenue. If they had only struck a rate to bring in £1,000 they would have been entitled to a subsidy at the rate of 10s. in the pound and would have only received £500 from the Government instead of the £3,000 which they obtained. I defy anybody in the House to contradict this, and it is my intention before the session closes, if I can get the support of members of the House, to move for an inquiry; because it is the fault, not of the present Treasurer, but of the Treasurers since the time of Mr. Gardiner, that gentleman having told me that when the Perth municipality were called upon to refund £6,000, distinct instructions were given to the Treasury officials to see that everybody was served alike. [*Mr. Angwin*: Being found out yourself,

you put everybody else away.] Possibly the hon. member may be interested in his electorate or municipality. I trust that, as nearly all the municipalities will be sufferers, I will obtain the support of this House. An inquiry will allow them to be just as magnanimous as Perth was and refund. If I am right in my statements I am quite certain that a sum of £10,000 will be obtained in refunds from the various municipalities of this State. Also in reference to the subsidies to roads boards, I know of one particular board which is now passing resolutions that if a land tax will not be imposed it is prepared to raise the necessary money for the requirements of its district. At present the rate that has been forced on the roads boards of this State in nearly half the cases is costing more to collect than it is worth. I recently examined several of the balance sheets, from which it is clear that after providing for the salaries of various officials, the balance has been taken out of Government subsidies; and I think it will be far cheaper and better for the community if the Government can see their way to withdraw their land tax proposal, and grant to these local bodies fuller self-government and greater rating powers. Another means of saving revenue is to be found in the civil service. Probably very few members, and probably very few electors, know the facts I am about to relate. On last year's figures our revenue is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions, of which a million or nearly a million is ear-marked for interest and sinking fund on loans, leaving $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions for other expenditure. This morning I ascertained what were the salaries of civil servants for the past year; and they amount to the enormous sum of $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions. It really comes to this. As against the million we expend on public works, $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions goes in salaries to officials of the civil service. And yet we have a Public Service Commissioner who, so far at all events, has made no attempt to reform the service. As to the Railway Department, I am quite certain, from figures I have had an opportunity of noting, that a huge saving can be effected; and in fact, I am told on the best authority that nearly a quar-

ter of a-million can be saved on the railways alone. I am not referring principally to wages; but even referring to the men only, we find we have 1,612 miles of railway manned by 6,408 officials.

The Premier: Within twenty miles of two thousand.

Mr. H. BROWN: These are last year's figures for all the States. Queensland has $3,137\frac{1}{2}$ miles of railway—practically twice our mileage—and runs it with 5,142 men, or practically 1,300 less than we employ. South Australia, with over a hundred more miles of railway than we have runs them with just half our staff. Comparing the profits made we find that Queensland makes 121 per cent. more than Western Australia; South Australia, 113 per cent. more; Victoria, 150 per cent.; and New South Wales, 133 per cent. Therefore I hope that the Government will at the earliest opportunity take drastic steps to curtail what I think is a waste of expenditure in that department. I say again that wages are only a small item of this waste. The waste must be going on in all branches of the department; and that fact is emphasised by the figures, which can be checked in the *Year Book of Australia*, which figures are practically the same as we have seen in the Press during the last few weeks. [*Mr. Bolton:* Too many officials.] There are practically five men for each mile of railway in this State. In Queensland there are about one and a-half; in South Australia, about one and three-quarters. Hence I think the interjection of the hon. member is borne out by the figures I have just quoted. I am sorry that the Speech contains no mention of a repeal of the Public Service Act. We have read the speech of the Attorney General, in which he states, and I am quite with him, that the civil service is now seething with discontent. [*Labour Members:* No.] At no time have we seen any attempt at economy by the Public Service Commissioner. The only transfers we have ever seen have been men from the Public Works Department, which practically is overmanned, to other branches of the service, and in nearly every case with very poor results. There was one gen-

tleman transferred from the Public Works Department to reform the Agricultural Bank, and I understood from the Minister for Agriculture that the man was a blunderer. Now we find that the Public Service Commissioner gives him six months' holiday; and I referred in my speech last session to the fact that the Auditor General refused to audit this man's books because they were not half written up and the additions were only in pencil. Another officer from the Public Works Department was transferred to three different offices and none of them would have him and he was sent back. I am not blaming the Government in this, but I say it is the uselessness of the Public Service Commissioner. We have one officer who was looked upon for years as an expert accountant in the Public Works Department and who was sent to the Lands Department to take up the work of the old accountant who did it with four men. The new accountant has now 26 men, and he would get more if he could. With reference to the freezing works I think it is a very necessary work to establish them in the North-West. No doubt it will save the introduction of tick to the clean portions of this State. I have seen in South Africa the great losses to stock through the tick, and I think any means whereby we can keep it out of the lower portion of the State the better. More especially when we see the large percentage of losses on board the ships that come down do I think it will be money well spent either by private enterprise or by the State. With reference to the liquor traffic I am also with the Premier, but I do not intend to support any drastic autocratic legislation or any means that will be confiscation without compensation. I also think the introduction of a railway to the North-West is badly needed, and I am at all events prepared to give it my support. I am very pleased indeed to see that a step has been made for pushing on a water and sewerage scheme for the city of Perth, and I trust that the Minister for Works will take notice of the report of that Commission which has been appointed. I am sorry to see that the blame

has been cast on the Engineer-in-Chief for at all events some blunder that has taken place in the construction of filter beds at Burswood. I think that the person to blame is the officer in charge of water supply for years. I would like to see the blame placed on the right shoulder, and I trust that if the report of this Commission proposes that the water shall come from Mundaring Weir the Government will act upon the report. In conclusion I think that the Arbitration Act as we have found it during the past few months has been absolutely abortive; and the thanks of the State are due to the Premier for bringing the strike to so speedy a conclusion. [Mr. Holman: Bill Adams !] The member interjecting has published to the world what the Premier did to settle the strike. There is no doubt that the majority of you (Labour members), I do not say all of you, have to live by notoriety. Without it you would not be here. This (Mr. Holman) is the gentleman who congratulated the Premier on the efforts he made to put an end to the strike.

Mr. Holman : That is absolutely untrue.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member must not make that remark.

Mr. Brown : I have my statement on the best authority.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member (Mr. Holman) must withdraw that remark.

Mr. H. Brown : It is a compliment from him.

Mr. Holman : I withdraw the word "untrue," and say "incorrect."

Mr. H. BROWN : I say, without fear of contradiction, that the hon. member was the first to congratulate the Premier on the efforts he had made to bring the strike to a settlement. The strike might have been settled weeks sooner. It was suggested that a referendum of the men should be taken. Did the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman) agree to that proposition? On all political questions the "gag" of that gentleman would be, "A referendum; the Bill to the people!" But would he submit to the workers the terms of settlement? Certainly not; because he lives by agitation. If the man

had been better advised, they would have gone back to work weeks or months ago. I am not here to discuss whether the award of the Arbitration Court was or was not good. You and your party are the chief members who support the Arbitration Court. You go even to the extent of appointing one of your own representatives a judge in that court. You had also the advantage of appointing, through this House, the Supreme Court Judge who acts as President. The other member of the Arbitration Court is, as you know, appointed by the employers. So practically you had a voice in appointing two of the judges. I think the existing President was appointed during what was, fortunately, the short *régime* of the Labour Government. I am not arguing whether the pay of the workers was or was not sufficient. Labour men were the greatest agitators for the Arbitration Court; and when they get an award, surely they should attempt to abide by it. If they are dissatisfied, there should be an appeal; and would it not have been far better for the State had the men been well advised, accepted the award, and appealed against it?

Mr. Holman: To whom could they appeal?

Mr. H. BROWN: If a court of appeal was not in existence, it could have been provided in the Act. You will possibly have an opportunity of appealing in the case of *Mr. Curran*, if you are not satisfied with the award you get in his case; and when the appeal is decided you will have to abide by the decision.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. H. BROWN: Where we have a court constituted as we have in this State, we should all loyally abide by it. If the verdict is against the employer he has to pay, but it evidently does not seem to hold against the unions. In conclusion, I hope and trust that the Premier, like *Mr. Deakin* at Home, will be prepared to state for the benefit of the investors that he will have the same protection for their capital as the worker has for his labour; and I am sure, if that goes forth to the world, that greater interest will be taken

in Australia generally; and that investors will come in here as of old and invest their capital with the same chance of getting a return for it. I have much pleasure in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until Tuesday next, 9th July, at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Question passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at 4.53 o'clock until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 9th July, 1907.

	PAGE
Sitting Days and Hours	22
Debate on Address-in-Reply resumed	22

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

Prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the *Colonial Secretary*: 1, Gaol Regulations—Additions and Alterations; 2, Goldfields Water Supply Administration—(a.) By-law No. 87; (b.) Amendment of Schedule of prices of water; 3, Audit Act, 1904—(a.) Orders in Council under Section 35; (b.) Sundry Amendments of Regulations; 4, Public Works Department, Roads Act, 1902—By-laws of the Road Boards of Nullagine, Mount Margaret, Yilgarn, Bunbury, Nelson, Marble Bar, Mourambine, Dardanup, Preston; 5, By-laws of Municipalities of Beverley, Boulder, Claremont, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Leonora, Perth, South