

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not want that explanation. I want yes or no as to whether the member for Kalgoorlie intended to reflect on the honour or integrity of the member for Pingelly. Yes or no. No explanation.

Mr. Green: I had no such intention.

Mr. HARPER: I am satisfied.

Mr. Heitmann: The shareholders are not satisfied.

Mr. HARPER: They are perfectly satisfied. Of course, they are never satisfied when they buy shares which happen to do down.

Mr. Heitmann: And when the bottom is out of the mine when they buy them.

Mr. HARPER: There was no bottom out of the mine.

Mr. Heitmann: Of course there was, and you know it.

Mr. HARPER: I do not know it. The mine petered out below the 300-foot level as many other mines have done. That happened with the Lady Shenton at Menzies, and with the Cosmopolitan at Niagara, and in hundreds of cases.

Mr. Heitmann: Is it not a fact that the management were selling the shares when they were rising?

Mr. HARPER: I sold some at 4s., some at 12s., and some at 25s., to Lionel Robinson and Co. They took 25,000 on option, and after having the mine sampled bought 20,000, some at 22s. 6d., and some at 25s. That is a business transaction that has nothing of a derogatory character to any of the directors or myself. There was something a bit wrong when some of the old directors handed over the staff to the new concern, and the latter thought they would change the staff, and so made the position much worse for themselves. Reverting to the debate last year the Minister for Mines interjected—

“And the person who made so much money out of the Golden Pole might have been imprisoned if the mine had been sampled by the Government.”

I wrote to the Minister asking to whom he referred in that case, and I received no reply, so I would like to ask the Minister for Mines now whom he meant on that

occasion. It is unfair to make these remarks unless one has proof of them, and if anyone has proof I would like him to come out. Throughout the career of the Golden Pole it was honestly and squarely managed by every manager, not only by myself but by every other manager as far as I know, and no exaggerated statements were made with the object of boosting the shares. I hope this matter will be cleared up now and finished with, and I again ask the Minister whom he referred to. If he referred to me and made the remark carelessly, and is ready to apologise, I will be satisfied, but I will not be satisfied with anything else.

Mr. Heitmann: You got the sack for sleeping in a “cousin Jack” barrow.

On motion by Mr. A. E. Piesse debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 5th August, 1913.

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—FOOD AND DRUGS REGULATIONS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I promised the House at its last sitting that I would to-day make a statement as to the Government's intentions in regard to the Food and Drugs Regulations, concerning which the Hon.

Mr. Kingsmill moved the adjournment of the House last week. I may say that Cabinet has gone fully into this question. The position is this: the regulations were laid on the Table of the House on the 26th June, and after the Address-in-reply was moved and seconded the House adjourned until the 29th July. There was no opposition to such adjournment, although it meant the automatic validation of the regulations. Even Mr. Kingsmill himself raised no objection to the adjournment of the House under the circumstances. If the House had wished, the opportunity could have been insisted upon to discuss, and, if necessary, disallow one or all of these regulations. The House, however, took no such action. Therefore at the expiration of thirty days the regulations became law, and they have all the force of law to-day.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Do you suggest that we should have discussed them on the opening day of Parliament?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I hope the hon. member will allow me to proceed.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I asked only a simple question.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have given the legal aspect of the case, but there is another aspect which we cannot overlook. The Government did not realise, and this House did not realise until too late, the effect in this particular direction of an adjournment over a month. It cannot be questioned that one of the effects of that adjournment was that the Legislative Council had not an opportunity of discussing the regulations, and, if thought fit, of disallowing them. Under the circumstances the question arises—Would it be fair for the Government to take advantage of such a position even to enforce its policy?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: No.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There can be only one reply to the question; it would not be fair. It would be treating the Legislative Council with very scant courtesy. Moreover, it would be establishing, in my opinion, a very dangerous precedent which none of us would wish to see created. In the circumstances

what I am desirous of telling the House to-day is this: if the House, by a specific motion, expresses the opinion that any of the regulations should be revoked, the Government will respect its opinion and carry out its wishes in that regard, at the same time of course throwing upon the Legislative Council the full responsibility for any action that it takes. Moreover, until the House has had an opportunity of coming to a decision upon this question, no further prosecutions under the regulations will be sanctioned.

Members: Hear, hear!

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES, EASTERN GOLDFIELDS.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Have the Government expended any money on the goldfields in the erection of workers' dwellings or made advances to the people there in the direction of assisting them to provide homes for themselves? 2, If so, what amount has been expended? 3, Are the Government prepared to give the people of the goldfields the same facilities as those elsewhere to provide homes for themselves?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, The board has advanced £340. 3, Each application must be dealt with on its merits.

QUESTION—SECONDARY SCHOOL, EASTERN GOLDFIELDS.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, In view of the large number of boys and girls on the Eastern Goldfields whose parents are desirous of their getting a more advanced education than the State schools provide, do the Government deem it advisable to establish there a secondary school? 2, Is anything being done towards establishing such a school? 3, If so, can any idea be given as to when the school will be available for students?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, A site has been secured and plans have been drawn up for the buildings. 3, It is hoped that the school will be ready for students next February.

QUESTION — SECONDARY AND TECHNICAL SCHOOL FEES.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Do the Government not regard it as anomalous that whilst education is free at the University of Western Australia, fees should be charged at State secondary and technical schools as well at the School of Mines? 2, Do the Government intend to abolish fees at the schools mentioned, and if so, when?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, The fees were abolished at the Modern School from the 1st January, 1913, and Cabinet decided in June last to abolish fees in technical and secondary schools and at the School of Mines as from January 1, 1914. Regulations are now being drawn up to give effect to this decision.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Hon. R. D. McKENZIE, leave of absence for twelve consecutive sittings granted to the Hon. J. D. Connolly on the ground of urgent private business.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 31st July.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central): I have read through the Speech of the Governor very carefully, and of course I listened to it at the opening of Parliament, and it strikes me that the most prominent feature of it is the omission of some matters of paramount importance. For instance, there is no mention in this Speech of the financial condition of Western Australia at the present moment. The fact that we have a very large deficit has been entirely ignored, and we have no information from the Government as to what means they intend to take, if any, to reduce this deficit. The financial statement at the end of June certainly looked fairly satisfactory, because during that month the deficit was reduced by the very large sum of over £100,000—the exact amount I be-

lieve was £107,000—so that instead of an accumulated deficit of £400,000, the total was reduced to £311,000, but apparently that condition of things did not really show the actual financial position, because at the end of July, in another thirty-one days, the deficit was increased by the large sum of £75,000. I say there was no mention whatever in the Speech as to how this matter is to be dealt with. Neither is there any mention as to how this enormous drift to the rear was brought about. But in the public Press in an indirect way we get a certain amount of information giving the reasons of some members of the Government as to why the deficit had accumulated. One of these reasons, which has been made very prominent, is that of concessions to farmers in the shape of rents which are in arrear, and concessions in connection with water supply. The estimate made by the Colonial Treasurer for the year ended 30th June last was realised, and the increased deficit was brought about not by a decrease of revenue, but by an increase of expenditure, which apparently was unforeseen by the Government, and as I have said before, one of the chief reasons advanced has been the granting of concessions to selectors in the way of rents in arrear and in connection with water supply. Another reason was also given, namely, that money was due to the Agricultural Bank for interest amounting to somewhere about £24,000. So far as the concessions to farmers in the dry districts of the State are concerned, to my way of thinking, the manner in which the Government acted towards these farmers was not at all to the credit of the Government. I think one of the most melancholy instances that has ever come before my notice was during some months of last year, when week after week there appeared caveats against the leases of farmers, so that their credit was stopped by the storekeepers, and the Agricultural Bank was unable to advance anything owing to these caveats against their leases. And these caveats were followed by bills of sale for petty sums of £25,

£30, £40, and £50, which appeared by the page every week. I may say that some of the farmers in South Australia were in a similar condition some 20 or 25 years ago, and the Government advanced seed wheat to them, but asked no security whatever. Most of the money, I believe, was paid in the course of time, but no particular time was specified and, as a matter of fact, no security was asked, but that did not interfere in any way with the credit of the people who were in difficulty through no cause produced by want of effort on their part, but simply through the fact that rain had ceased to fall in their districts during the season. With reference to the rents overdue, surely the Treasurer must have anticipated this matter because the revenue was practically the same as he estimated when he brought the Budget before another place last year. So far as the Agricultural Bank is concerned, and the £24,720, that amount does not in any way affect the position of the finances of the State. That money is owing to the bank; it has not been paid out of Consolidated Revenue to meet the bank's shortage; it has no effect whatever on the balance sheet of the State. My own opinion is that the chief trouble is not a decline in revenue, because there has been no decline in that direction, but the principal reason why the revenue has not increased enormously as it should have done is the policy adopted by the Government. The decline in land settlement has been brought about by the policy of the Government, the wasting of money on such schemes as State owned steamers, which in themselves have accounted for a loss of from £20,000 to £30,000, and I suppose, with interest and sinking fund added, even more. No doubt a certain effect has also been produced because of the shortage of money in the State, and for this also to some extent the Government are to blame, because of their drifting policy regarding the Savings Bank. If the Government had decided last year that the State should conduct its Savings Bank or that it should give it up, the people would have known where they

were, but the matter was postponed day after day and week after week until a few days before the end of the year, when the Government announced that it was their intention to run the bank themselves. The mischief, however, had been done. The Commonwealth had arranged to run their own offices and the State has since then been deprived of a considerable sum of money. There is one great public work which we all take much interest in and that is the work of railway construction. I am sorry Mr. Cornell is not present because he talked about the ewe lamb which the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth had. It was a very big ewe lamb, it has been turned into a lion, because it has altered the whole face of the policy of the Commonwealth, but here we have only one little ewe lamb in the shape of a railway proposal, and that is our old friend the Esperance railway. If I were assured that the construction of a line from Norseman to Esperance would open up a large extent of country which would grow sufficient to give a fair return to settlers there, I certainly would have no objection to it, but I am not at all convinced that there is any extent of agricultural land in that portion of the State. In order to get information as to what actually has been done there in the way of cultivation, and what the results have been, I have taken the trouble to look up the latest statistics. I find that in 1912-13 there were in the Esperance district 918 acres under wheat which yielded 3.2 bushels to the acre; oats, 19 acres yielding 6.2 bushels, and barley 10 acres yielding 6.2 bushels per acre. There were also 1,360 acres cut for hay which gave half a ton to the acre. No one is going to persuade me that a country which has been occupied for a great many years is worthy of what the Government desire to give it in face of the returns which I have quoted. Only last week I met a settler who for nine years has been farming at a place called Grass Patch, which is about the best part of that country, and I was not astonished at what he told me. If all the railways which have already been authorised by

this Parliament had been constructed, or were in a fair way to being completed within a reasonable time, say 18 months or so, we might then enquire into the matter of the Esperance proposal. But what are the facts? There are hundreds of settlers in different parts of the State waiting for railways to be completed to enable them to carry their produce to market, and in some cases they have been told, I believe by the Minister for Works, that they have no hope whatever of having them constructed, at any rate within the next year or two. In the circumstances it is not advisable to construct the Esperance railway because it is just possible that more important proposals, those in which hundreds of people are interested, would be neglected for the sake of that line. I am sorry Mr. Kirwan is out of the Chamber, because this particular work might be regarded as his pet lamb. I admit that Mr. Kirwan has fought splendidly for the construction of the line and if success is not achieved it will not be for want of fighting on his part. Notwithstanding his declaration that he is an absolutely independent member, his independence has always been in the direction of supporting the present Government. There are one or two matters that are definitely referred to in the Speech, and one of them is the proposal to re-introduce the Rights in Water and Irrigation Bill, the measure which was dealt with by this House last session and which was referred to a select committee, and also in regard to which a conference of both Houses was arranged without result, the Bill eventually being thrown into the waste paper basket. The report of the select committee was practically to the effect that it was advisable to have an irrigation measure to all intents and purposes similar to that which is law in New South Wales to-day. I need scarcely say that in New South Wales there is the largest irrigation scheme in Australia, the Barren Jack scheme, and it might also be said to be among the largest in the world. I believe the reservoir there is even bigger than the great dam at Assouan on the Nile. It is pure nonsense to say that this House prevented the Bill being

carried into law. I am quite certain if the Government had introduced a reasonable measure it would have passed. If the Government introduce a measure on lines similar to that which was rejected last year by this House, I for one will vote against it. If, however, it is reasonable and it shows a real desire to bring about irrigation without confiscating the water rights of the people, in all probability this House will deal with it sympathetically and reasonably. With regard to the question of immigration, that has been referred to in the Speech in this very indirect way: "Subsequent events have shown that the Premier's visit was a most opportune one as during his journeyings on the continent of Europe, England, and America, most important questions affecting the welfare of the State, including finance, railway facilities . . . " and then a number of other things are mentioned and among them immigration. There is nothing whatever said in the Speech on the question of immigration excepting this indirect allusion which I have just read. The Premier when in London certainly spoke in favour of immigration and he told them in the Old Country that they had the people and we had the land, that they had the money and we wanted it to develop our country and their people to settle on the land. He got two millions of money, but there is not a single word said now as to the policy of the Government on this great question. In my opinion the question of immigration is the greatest of all. We hear a good deal about that dreadful disease, consumption—white plague—which unfortunately is not confined to any country, and which is just about as bad in Australia as it is anywhere else, but if Australia does not go in for a big policy of immigration and people its vast areas with white men, women, and children, we will have a black plague. What is the use of people burying their heads in the sand and believing that a population of four and a half millions can stand against the myriads in the continent of Asia. The thing is preposterous. The man who would advocate keeping out white people from this coun-

continent is the greatest enemy to Australia and especially to Western Australia, where we have a population equal to that of a second rate city in the Old Country or America, or even on the Continent. Ours is a vast territory nearly a million square miles in extent, with unlimited latent resources. We cannot expect to draw unlimited numbers from the Old Country nor from northern Europe, for the simple reason that the conditions of life there are being assimilated to our own. I see in to-day's *West Australian* that the miners in Scotland are asking for a minimum wage of 7s. per day. Most of them are getting at the present time from 6s. 6d. to 6s. 8d., and none of them would come to Australia for 10s. or 12s. per day, because 7s. or 8s. in Scotland is quite as good as, say, 12s. in Australia. Now is the time to get these people. Shortly we will not be able to get them, because they will be better off there than if they were here. We may get a few from Germany, and that might suit Mr. Cornell, who admires Germany so much that he runs down the Old Country in comparison. He says that Germany has better technical schools, and is better organised, and possibly his sympathy with Germany is largely due to the fact that it is the great European centre of millions of socialists. But Mr. Cornell need not be afraid of the Old Country. Notwithstanding the fact that Germany has made tremendous progress, and all to her credit and the benefit of the rest of the world, not later than last year Great Britain did a business of 500 million pounds more in foreign countries than Germany did. That is to say, Great Britain imported 300 million pounds worth more and exported 230 million pounds worth more. If there is any department in which Germany has progressed it is shipping, and yet according to the last *Lloyd's Register*, there is 19 million tons of shipping under the British flag, of which nearly 18 millions belongs to the Old Country, and the rest of the world has about 40 million tons, including about four million tons under the German flag, and four million tons under the flag of the United States. That that progress is being maintained is shown by the fact that last year the Old Country

built over two million tons of shipping. Belfast itself built more ships than the United States of America. The Tees and the Tyne built more than Germany, and the Clyde built more than Germany and the United States combined. Hon. members will see that the Old Country's practical education is quite sufficient to enable her to compete with other parts of the world and beat them. The Federal elections were referred to, and as a result of what Mr. Cornell terms "one little ewe lamb" we have a change of Government. To my mind, the most important result of that change is the fact that the Minister for Home Affairs has issued an edict abolishing preference to unionists, and I presume there will be some opportunity during the next few months of repealing the Electoral Act, so that the freedom of the Press may be restored. Two more undemocratic proceedings never took place on the face of the globe than the gagging of the Press and the giving of preference to any section of the community, even supposing that section comprised nine-tenths of the community. Preference to unionists simply means going back to the Middle Ages, and overturning the freedom and liberty that our forefathers fought for. The Labour party ought to be ashamed of their action in that regard, and I am certain that had they remained in power and continued to carry that principle into effect unionism would have been broken into pieces, and rightly so. A most important fact mentioned in the Speech, and one that I am very glad to see, is that the mining industry has ceased to drift. At last there is a slight improvement in the right direction, and it is to be hoped that this will continue from month to month until we regain the position which existed in 1903, when the gold production in Western Australia was at its zenith. The most important matter before the Government and the people is land settlement, and there is no doubt that land settlement is going backward instead of advancing by leaps and bounds, as it should do. Nevertheless, I notice that the Speech refers to land settlement as proceeding satisfactorily. There is nothing satisfactory about land settlement when it shows a con-

siderable decrease on the figures for last year, especially in view of the fact that population has increased in the meantime. And there is no doubt, in my opinion, that this is due to a large extent to the fact of non-alienation of Crown lands being part of the policy of the Government. I do not say that the Government intended to stop land settlement, but the very fact of their endeavouring to put the non-alienation principle on the statute-book has undoubtedly had that effect. This matter was discussed recently by the Labour Congress, and I believe the principle was confirmed by 38 votes to 36, although, to their credit, I believe most of the Ministers opposed it. They were defeated, but I presume they are in a certain sense bound to obey the behests of those who claim to be their masters. There is one strange commentary on this non-alienation of Crown lands. In one part of the Governor's Speech there is the following reference to workers' homes—

As evidencing the value of the Act, the number of new buildings which have been erected is 335, representing £127,470, and the homes extended or improved 48, equal to £11,555, or a total of £139,025 which has been advanced for almost entirely new homes. In addition 56 mortgages have been discharged, representing £14,950, and 150 homes have been purchased, involving £56,270; the total expenditure approved amounting to £362,000.

Now, that certainly shows that the Act has been productive of a great deal of good as an Act for providing homes for people with an income of, I believe, up to about £300. But the strange thing in connection with the matter is this: Perhaps in order to explain what I mean I had better draw the attention of members to the fact that a little time ago I received an invitation to attend the laying by the Premier of the foundation stone of the first dwelling to be erected in Western Australia under the leasehold provisions of the Workers' Homes Act. Unfortunately, on account of the part of the State in which I reside, I received the notice after the function had taken place, but here is the position: While this Act has been a perfect success so far as regards the erection of homes

for workmen, it has been a perfect failure so far as the main object of the Government of the day is concerned. Their object was to build homes on leasehold property, and I presume that this invitation for the 25th June is correct when it refers to "the first dwelling to be erected in Western Australia under the leasehold provisions of the Workers' Homes Act." I do not think there could be a better commentary on the absurdity of this non-alienation of Crown lands. It is an instance of people practising an entirely different thing from that which they preach. I presume that the people who have had these homes built are mostly working men, and supporters of the Government, and they deserve a rebuke for asking for money for a purpose contrary to the expressed opinions of the majority of delegates at the Labour Congress. Hon. members will remember the passage in *Hamlet* where Laertes is warning Ophelia against the blandishments of Hamlet, and Ophelia replies—

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to
heaven,
Whilst
Himself the primrose path of dalliance
treads
And recks not his own rede.

The teaching of the Labour party is to abolish freehold property, and to build homes on leases, and there can be no better proof than this Workers' Homes Act that the people who put this plank on the fighting platform did not believe in it at all.

Hon. M. L. Moss: They all like a bit of freehold.

Hon. W. PATRICK: There is no doubt about that. It is human nature to desire to have a piece of land that a person may call his own. Just two or three words, and I shall have finished. As I have already said, land settlement is decreasing. To my mind, the object of introducing a measure to abolish the title to freehold land and at the same time introducing additional taxes on land already sold, is evidence that the object of the Government was to carry out a policy not only of non-alienation of Crown lands, but also of finally bringing about land nationalisation

by taxing off the land those already there. The prosperity of a country such as Australia, and more especially a State such as Western Australia, depends entirely on the primary producer, the farmer, the squatter, the miner, the timber worker, and so on, but the real support of Australia in the future will undoubtedly be the farmer; and, of course, if we stop settlement of land we must stop the progress and prosperity of the State, and if we tax people off the land we shall continue in the same direction by interfering with the occupation of land. The farmer is at present handicapped in every way. I notice that the Government intend to build an implement factory, and I hope that when they have finished it they will sell implements at a reasonable price. If they do so, and the implements are of good quality, I have no doubt the factory will be a success. I have my doubts about the success of the venture, but at the present time the farmer pays at least 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. more than he should do and more than is paid by the people of Canada, the United States, or Great Britain. He pays at least £1 a ton more for his artificial manures because there is a ring in the State, and I think it is the duty of any Government to try to break that ring to pieces. I do not blame the present Government especially, they are all alike in that matter. Last session a State steamship carried a cargo of superphosphate to one of the Eastern States. I do not object to that, so far as carrying a cargo is concerned, but these people consigned that superphosphate to the Eastern States, had to pay 10s. or 12s. a ton carriage on it, and then sold it at 5s. a ton less than the rate prevailing here. That is how the farmers are treated in this State, and I would like to see the Government take steps to smash up this ring. It is the duty of the Government of Western Australia to do everything they can to encourage settlement on the land, and they should give up this silly fad of trying to stop the sale of Crown Lands. Sell them as rapidly as is possible, as they can be taxed—we always have that power. I have no doubt that if the present policy is reversed, in a very few years this country would be one of the

greatest producers of grain and other produce in this continent of Australia.

Mr. R. J. LYNN (West): When Mr. Cornell was speaking at the last sitting I was much disposed to agree with him that a considerable amount of time is wasted in connection with the debate on the Address-in-reply. On Thursday night, however, after having heard Mr. Kirwan's remarks, and on reading the newspaper on Friday morning, I was somewhat inclined to alter my notion and regard this debate on the Address-in-reply as a very good safety valve at this particular juncture. I hope that Mr. Kirwan intended no reflection on the Ministry when he eulogised the Premier upon his return for having at once got hold of the strings of the situation and set to work to place the finances of this State on a solid basis. Next morning we had the July returns published, and I would not like to suggest that it was owing to the Premier's ill-health during the fortnight that those strings had been loosed again and the deficit made still greater. After the remarks made concerning the finances I referred to the yearly *Statistical Abstract* just in order to take out a few figures. I think they are somewhat alarming. In the year 1910-11 the revenue of this State was £3,850,440, which was equal to £13 17s. 1d. per head of the mean population of Western Australia. Taking the figures of the past financial year, we find that at the end of the period 1912-13 there was an increase of £746,219, or £1 1s. 8d. per head of the population, which is equivalent to an 8 per cent. increase of the revenue. That amount appears, perhaps, a very large increase in the revenue of the State, but when you turn to the debit side of the ledger and take into consideration the heavy excess expenditure, I think even the Government should reflect respecting some of the ventures they are at present embarking upon. The expenditure for 1910-11 amounted to £3,734,448, or equal to £13 8s. 9d. per head of the mean population. For last year, however, the expenditure increased by nearly 25 per cent. It jumped up to the enormous total of £4, 787,063, which was an increase of £1,052,615, or £2 2s. 5d. per head, or an equivalent of 16 per cent. increase in

expenditure. In those figures we have a second Customs House in the shape of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, whose figures increased 52 per cent. during the year. In 1911-12 the amount paid into Consolidated Revenue amounted to £97,801, but last year it represented no less than £147,290, or an increase of £49,491. It was explained in another place that that large increase was owing to the harbour improvement rate that had been accumulating for the past 12 or 18 months having been absorbed by the Treasury in order to be placed into the Consolidated Revenue of the State. The question was raised that it was hardly legal to carry that amount forward considering that at the end of the year all the finances had to be balanced.

The Colonial Secretary: What would you have done with it?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I submit that the harbour improvement rate is for a specific purpose and, in view of the large expenditure necessary to be incurred by the Fremantle Harbour Trust to-day, that some of the money might well have been earmarked for extensions now in progress.

The Colonial Secretary: They could not do it.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Then it simply means that the deficit should have been £400,000 and not £367,000 as stated. This particular amount was not revenue but was collected for a specific purpose and should have been set aside for that specific purpose. The point I desire to raise in connection with the finances of the State is this—seeing the large increase in expenditure which must be brought about to some extent by the trading concerns of the Government, the Government should seriously reflect before continuing upon the ventures they are now engaged in, or upon any further businesses of a speculative character. The finances of the State should be regarded as trust funds and should not be frittered away in any direction unless it is reproductive, or where there is a likelihood of it being so in the near future. During the recess, Mr. President, the Legislative Council was taken to task very many times in connection with the Traffic and Irrigation Bills of last session at functions which any of the

Ministers attended, and I was present at some of them, and whenever any requests were made in connection with grants for main roads the usual reply forthcoming was that had the Legislative Council not rejected the Traffic Bill last session ample revenue would have been found to assist them. I am inclined to support the Traffic Bill this session, because I recognise that the small amount of revenue that will be derived from licenses will not in any way assist the Government to give these grants of money to the Roads Boards Districts.

Hon. W. Patrick: The cost of collection would swamp it up.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The amount would hardly be sufficient to maintain the Perth-Fremantle road, and if the Government are to find sufficient revenue from licenses to maintain all the main arteries of this State, then we must look forward to some increased prosperity beyond what we have in our midst to-day. In connection with the Irrigation Bill I may say that I am not inclined to support that measure when it is reintroduced unless some reasonable measure of protection is given to the people that they hold at present. I hope, considering our large imports of dairy produce, amounting, as Mr. Moss said, to practically a million pounds, that some compromise will be effected between the two Chambers. I regard the reference to Electoral Reform in His Excellency's Speech, as being something of rather grave importance, not only to this House, but also to the State. I was very much surprised in reading the *West Australian* of Friday morning to note one reference in a statement made by the Premier in reply to a deputation on the subject of proportional representation. The Premier said—

One objection to preferential voting was, as had been evidenced at the election when Mr. R. J. Lynn, M.L.C., was returned, that it forced an elector to give a vote to a man whose politics he did not agree with at all.

I read that about 16 times and I am not able to follow it yet, because that election was fought out between two candidates in opposition to the selected Labour candidate, Mr. Healy. Mr. Allen was the first

candidate counted out and his second preference votes, or 85 per cent. of them, were recorded in my favour, so the reference that under the preferential system electors were forced to vote for a man whose politics they did not believe in, seems to have been brought about because they neither believed in my politics nor the politics of the Labour party at that time, but Mr. Scaddan had something behind this statement which he did not tell that deputation. He had behind that statement something that had been committed as a grave violation of the Electoral Act. I venture to state something has been done by the present Ministry that would not be tolerated by the Liberals of this State. Immediately that election was over I was declared successful, but I was surprised when coming out of the courthouse two or three days after my election to be informed by a clerk of the court that two clerks from Perth were sent down, that the seals of the ballot box had been broken, and that the clerks were counting the votes! I was so surprised that I immediately—

Hon. W. Patrick : Was that made public ?

Hon. R. J. LYNN : No, it was not made public, and I will tell you why. I was so surprised at hearing this that I went along and consulted Mr. Moss. Under Section 150 of the Act, a returning officer had no right to permit any interference with those ballot papers after they had been counted. Under the Act he had a duty to perform, and that was to seal up those ballot papers and send them to the Clerk of the Legislative Council with whom they should remain a certain time until it was seen whether any appeal was to be made in connection with the election; and they should be held and in no way seen or interfered with, except by an order of a Supreme Court Judge. What do we find ? That the eleven votes representing the difference between the defeated candidate and myself had been scrutinised—that clerks in connection with Government offices had placed a civil servant like the resident magistrate of Fremantle, who was the returning officer, in a position in

which he could have been criminally prosecuted and fined £200, or, alternately, imprisoned for twelve months. I venture to suggest that no Government have a right to create such a breach of the Act. No authority should violate to such an extent the sacredness and secrecy of the ballot-box. What would have been my position had any appeal been lodged within the time specified by the Act ? I should have been in the unfortunate position that clerks from the Government had been sent down to Fremantle and had counted all the ballot papers, which of course could have been easily tampered with. How easy to nullify the effect of the eleven votes by putting the figure 1 in front of a name, and so converting a first preference vote into a second preference vote ! In that election the electors were allowed to mark their votes I. and II., instead of the figure 2, so how easy would it have been to nullify the value of those eleven votes representing the difference between the successful and the unsuccessful candidate ! I did not mention this on the occasion of the Address-in-reply of last year, because it was then within the time when an appeal could have been lodged against my return. I submit that no Government should place a civil servant in so false a position, and I think in connection with the proposed Electoral Reform Bill some nominee outside the influence of a departmental head should be appointed, in order that that sort of thing might be stopped. I had never previously heard of such a course being taken by a Government. When I consulted Mr. Moss on this breach of the Act he was so astounded that he immediately sent me back to the returning officer to advise him of his position. Although I considered it a duty to have brought this matter forward, I regret very much that I have been forced to-night to mention it in reply to those references by the Premier. Not only were the ballot-boxes not kept secret, but the actual number of preferential votes cast for each of the candidates at that election could be told to any man in the street. They were told to me, and my

defeated opponent was told the same. I have no desire to further stress this point, other than to say that clean administration should be above such an action as that. When we have all these eulogies heaped upon a party which claims all the virtues in connection with clean administration it is hard to understand that they should have resorted to this action in connection with that election. I hope the Colonial Secretary will take a note of what I have said in this respect, and see that when the proposed Electoral Reform Bill is brought forward it will contain provisions precluding any possible repetition of the offence.

Hon. J. F. Cullen : Did these clerks belong to the Electoral Department ?

Hon. R. J. LYNN : I understand they were Government clerks, and I believe the returning officer had some instruction, I cannot say whether it was verbal or written, to permit the ballot papers being unsealed. They knew the second preference of Mr. Healey's votes as well as of Mr. Allen's votes and my own, and were able to say that I would not have been returned had any value been attached to the second preference vote. I can quite understand that, for the reason that Mr. Allen and myself in contesting that election canvassed for Lynn No. 1 and Allen No. 2, from my supporters, and Allen No. 1 and Lynn No. 2 from his supporters; but in respect to the Labour party, they did not want Lynn, so they had printed on their cards Healey 1, Allen 2, Lynn 3. It was the policy of the Labour party to give the second preference votes to Mr. Allen, and therefore Mr. Allen would have out-voted me, taking the second preferential votes into consideration. I hope the Colonial Secretary will offer some little explanation as to why such a gross breach of the Electoral Act should have been made in connection with the election; because it is hardly a fair thing that a civil servant, above all, should be placed in a position to have to disclose this information and render himself liable to imprisonment. I do not wish to detain the House any longer. There are one or two things in His Excellency's Speech on which I

will have something to say when the second reading of the Esperance Railway Bill is reached. The question will require a considerable amount of attention, and the secretary of the Esperance Railway League has been kind enough to supply all members of the House with valuable information. When that measure comes forward I propose to have something to say in connection with it.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban) : Much as I always appreciate listening to the clever speeches of Mr. Kirwan, as most of us do, still I would like to say a few words in regard to my friend's resentment of the criticism by some of the Liberal members of the House, and also in regard to his firm belief in the progress of the State under the present Government. My friend's position the other night reminded me of a story attributed to Mark Twain. Mark Twain is said to have been travelling over a very slow American railway, one of those which we are told are controlled by large companies, sometimes called combines or trusts. Mark Twain said to the conductor, "Are the passengers on this train allowed to offer their advice to the officials of this train if it is done in a very respectful manner?" The conductor replied that he thought they were. "Then," said Mark Twain, "Would it not be advisable to unhitch the cow-catcher from the front of the train and put it on the back of the train? For this reason: there is no chance of our overtaking a cow which might be on the line, but there is every probability of such a cow catching us up and walking into the train and biting one of the passengers." I want to connect this up with my friend's views in this way: From what he said it seemed to me that instead of criticising the actions of the Government we are only to be allowed to offer our advice in a friendly and respectful manner. If this State is going to be landed, as a good many of us think it will be landed, with a great many of those experimental socialistic schemes, it will be necessary to unhitch the State cow-catcher from the front and put it on the back, in order to prevent disaster from

overtaking us. It is for this reason that I made reference to the story.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I was afraid you were going to hold up the Government as a cow.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: My friend, Mr. Kirwan, went on and by a process of negative reasoning or by a process of exclusion, almost established himself as the only politically virtuous man in the House; because he would have us believe that all holding Liberal ideas in this House were endeavouring to make it a House of a party character, whereas he himself, having been returned as an Independent, was the only one who, in a proper spirit, criticised anything brought forward by the Government.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: He is the boast of the hatters.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: But my friend went on to strongly attack the Wilson Government and uphold the present Government. He also went on to picture to us a public outraged at the idea of the attitude taken up by this House towards certain measures brought down by the Government. Instead of that I think it is likely to be a very grateful public. I think the public will be more inclined to thank us for having protected them against certain measures brought forward last session, such for instance as that withholding the freehold from farmers, presumably for the benefit of the farmers; though there is in the farmers' own platform a direct denial of the leasehold tenure. I think they are likely to be grateful for the fate which overtook that Bill. They will also be inclined to thank us for having protected them against such an enactment as the Land and Income Tax Bill, brought forward and withdrawn, a Bill which sought to place upon the possessor of an income of £250 a penny tax, and on the possessor of an income of £251 a twopenny tax. Then there is that enactment, the Public Works Committee Bill, which, to my mind, sought to create a miniature Parliament which would be of course an exact reflection, owing to its constitution, of the present Parliament as it exists, and there-

fore would really be only to reproduce the Public Works and railway proposals of the Government. The public would be inclined to thank the House for having protected them from a few measures like that. Now, to my mind, we have to read the Speech of His Excellency in connection also with resolutions passed by the Labour Congress. What must strike hon. members in reading the two documents together is the branching out on the part of the present Government in socialistic experiments, and this at a time when, I venture to say, such socialistic experiments should not be entertained. In the Speech, and also in the proceedings of the Labour Congress, we have references made to the construction of abattoirs at North Fremantle and also references to the State sawmills, in which, we are told, good progress is being made. The Labour Congress sets out such works as the nationalisation of the liquor traffic, State fire, life and accident insurance, the establishment of State flour mills, State agricultural development, marketing and export departments, State manufacture of fertilisers and agricultural machinery, State clothing factory, free technical, scientific and general education. These are the decisions of the Congress, and, in order to cover up anything that might be overlooked, they say, "the securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of the industrial and economical functions of the State and municipality." Then, to really emphasise this, and in order to see that the policy of the Government is impressed on those undertaking it, we are told here that it is recommended that no Government establishment or branch service be handed over to the control of a commissioner, or commissioners, unless it be a condition of the appointment that the Minister retains power to put into force the policy of the Government. In face of all that we have not a word in the Speech about agricultural development. We know that the construction of railways is stopped; we have it on the authority of the Minister for Works that there are 150 miles more railways to be

built and "he, for one, would not be a party to bringing in fresh measures for the construction of railways until these were built." We have immigration stopped, and in face of the Premier saying, "We want population," we have Congress saying, "We are of opinion that no further financial assistance should be rendered by the Government in aiding people to immigrate to Western Australia." To my mind there may be time for experiments—when experiments may be indulged in—but it should not be at a time when the State is in such a position as it is to-day, and not when we have not the money to spend in the direction I have mentioned. Experiments may be all very well but when experimenting with other people's money that makes all the difference. People should experiment with their own money and when they can afford it. May I draw, for the moment, attention to the State Labour Congress that has taken place, and I do this to show that criticism on the part of the House is amply justified. Mr. McCallum, as secretary of the Congress, says that this is the Parliament of Labour. He also says Congress has laid down the principles upon which the State will be governed during the next three years. We know, therefore, that for the next three years the Government in power are carrying out that platform. We know, too, that Congress was composed—I hope I am fairly criticising—of delegates of trades unions. They had to be accredited and nobody else was allowed there; their deliberations were secret. No one else had the advantage of being there.

Hon. F. Davis: You have the report in the *Westralian Worker*.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: I have not seen it but why not be allowed to see the reports in the other papers, which most of us like to see. Personally I have not seen the reports in the *Westralian Worker*.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I do not want to see the *Worker*.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: That would give an opportunity of knowing what took place there. Under the circumstances

I ask the House, is it not the duty of those holding Liberal views to criticise what takes place under these circumstances? It is with that object I have referred to the Labour Congress and answered Mr. Kirwan. A great deal is said nowadays about the Conservative, and people rave about progress. Well, there is such a thing as progress. There is such progress as is made by a bull in a china shop, and in the Scriptures we know that a certain number of swine ran down a steep place into the sea. They made progress, too. Under these circumstances I, holding Liberal views, feel it my duty to criticise what has taken place. Referring very shortly to one or two measures mentioned in the Speech, may I first mention the Esperance Railway Bill. We have had a lot of valuable information from the leader in this House, and no doubt he has gone to pains in gathering information which will be a great deal of use to the House when the railway comes on for consideration. I do not want to say anything about the line from an agricultural point of view at the present time, but I want to draw attention, as Mr. Patrick did, to the circumstances under which the railway is brought forward. To my mind it will be very difficult for the Minister for Works to justify the construction of the railway when it is brought forward. In referring to the Dale river railway, or some such railway at Beverley, the Minister said—

The Government had had lines already authorised to complete before they could deal with other propositions. They had, however, secured Parliamentary authorisation for the construction of the Yillimining-Kondinin line of 70 miles, which had just been started, the Bolgart line of 30 miles, which had not been started, and the Cowcowing-Mt. Marshall line of 50 miles, which also had not yet been started. Thus they already had railways waiting to be started. When these matters were being considered, it had to be remembered that the State could only go on the London market with borrowing powers of a limited character, which meant that operations were limited to

a large extent, by the money borrowed. The railway they were interested in was within the scope of practical politics, but he did not want them to think that it was possible to start it within the next year or so.

He further went on to say—

He thought that it was absolutely wrong to pass Bills through Parliament and leave people to think that because the Bill had passed they would have their railway in a very short time. As a matter of fact, a letter had appeared in the Press recently in which a settler said that he had taken up land four years ago on the promise of a railway within 18 months, and the line, although under construction, was not yet completed. This had been the experience of others. Encouraged by the news that a railway was to be built, settlers had gone on to the land and started developing their holdings long before they should have done. He did not want to perpetuate that sort of thing. He desired to pass Bills for lines that were urgently needed, and then to go ahead constructing them as soon as possible. . . . When they realised that only 80 miles of the 600 miles authorised had not actually been started to-day, they would see that the Scaddan Government had pushed ahead at a great rate. When the remaining 80 miles had been put in hand, he would be able to go to the Government and ask them to go in for further railways. Personally he was convinced that they had started building railways in the wrong direction in Western Australia. He agreed with those who said that they should have served those areas which had an assured rainfall, and where success was certain before opening up the eastern districts. It was wrong, although he was farming himself in the eastern districts. People should not have been encouraged to go out there as early as they had done. . . . He would not be a party to introducing a Bill for the line this session, but the Premier might give Parliament an opportunity of dealing with the matter next session.

Later on he increased the mileage which he said already had to be constructed to 150 miles. These are the views of the Minister for Works on the prospects of railway building in Western Australia. In regard to electoral reform, I have taken a great deal of interest in this matter and I shall not deal with the matter here. I want members to thoroughly understand that those interested in this proposal simply wish the principle endorsed. We do not go so far as to discuss which system of proportional representation should be adopted. Before that is done every opportunity should be given for going thoroughly into the different systems so that the State can choose the one which is most suitable to its conditions. A great deal has been said of the question whether differentiation be allowed in the value of votes. That has been referred to to a large extent by myself, and I hope those who have read what I have had to say will have no difficulty in endorsing such a principle as differentiation in proportional representation. Therefore, it will be possible and advisable to give people who live at a distance from the seat of government, and who have not the same facilities of access as those in settled areas, an increased value per vote on account of that. With regard to a matter which came up in consequence of a question I asked the leader in this House, I refer to the Wongan Hills hotel, I would like to say a few words. The Government have obtained a provisional license for an hotel in the Wongan Hills township, and it will shortly become a full license. They have obtained that license under Section 45 of the Act, which provides that if there is no licensed house within 15 miles of an already licensed house the applicant may get a license. But what I complain of is this: the Government have got that license in the face of an adverse vote, in fact three adverse votes of the people in the Irwin district, in which this hotel is situated. According to the resolution of Parliament in 1911, the questions were put to the people, "Are you in favour of the State holding any new license in your district," and they answered "No"; "Are you in favour of the State holding all

licenses." and they answered "No"; "Are you in favour of an increase of licenses in your district," and they said "No." In spite of all that the Government established this hotel in the district, and I claim that the letter if not the spirit of the Act, which only contemplates the Government becoming the licensed holder under the will of the people, and that is by local option, has been broken. If members turn to Section 87 of the Act they will see that that is so. Section 87 reads—

If at any poll of the electors taken under Part V. of this Act resolution B is carried in any district, and on the question "Do you vote that all new publican's general licenses in the district shall be held by the State"? a majority of the votes given is in the affirmative, the Minister may, with the approval of the Government, but subject to the provisions of this Act—(a) Establish State hotels in the district; and (b) Carry on, by his authorised agent in any such State hotel, the trade and business of a person holding a publican's general license: Provided that every such agent, before acting in that capacity in any such hotel, must duly apply for and obtain from the Licensing Court a publican's general license in respect of such hotel, but Section forty-seven of this Act shall not apply: Provided, also, that an application for the transfer of such license may be made by the Minister without the concurrence of such agent. (2.) Any State hotel shall be subject to the provisions of Part V. of this Act.

I submit that clearly means that the Government may only establish a State hotel if the resolutions are passed and having been refused by the people of the district they have no right to put an hotel there. I question whether a mandamus would not lie, prohibiting the licensing bench granting a license when the application comes up. In this case the Government have over-ridden the will of the people and not only in that one case. Every person buying a block of land in that township was prohibited from having a license of his own; the result was that every person knowing the conditions under

which the land was purchased said, "This is a teetotal district." Yet the Government put up an hotel.

The Colonial Secretary: There were blocks reserved for an hotel.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: No person buying a block of land in that township was entitled to hold a license. There is one other matter and that is the amendment of the Criminal Code. We are not told what the proposed amendment of the Criminal Code is to be, but since certain remarks are going about—I do not know if I am an alarmist—is it not wise for the Government to consider whether it is not desirable to meet a great trouble which may arise here and that is the white slave traffic. There is no harm in being prepared for it when it comes, and if such a vile thing has place in our midst, none more than ourselves will regret it if we are not in a position to meet it, and I ask the Government whether they will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to deal with this evil. I do not propose to offer any further remarks on the Address-in-reply, but considering the state in which legislation is brought at the present time before this House and before the Parliament of this country, it seems to me that we are in great danger, and I think I am justified in my criticism, of becoming a despotic Parliament. A despotic monarch is bad enough, but I think a despotic Parliament is worse, and for the reasons I have mentioned I think that the House has every reason, and in fact every and ample justification, for strongly criticising the legislation brought forward under these conditions.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I am not going to detain the House very long in speaking on the Address-in-reply because, like many other members I consider that a lot of the debate which takes place is a waste of time and is of very little utility. I would just like to say that the debate in this Chamber this year as compared with last year seems to me to be very spiritless indeed. Last year the Government had almost the whole of the Chamber arrayed against them in opposition. We had a good deal of blood and thunder and the Governor

himself was arraigned by an amendment to the Address-in-reply, but to-day we find a very different attitude adopted by this Chamber, and to anyone of an inquiring turn of mind it is interesting to know why such a change has come about in such a short space of time. I do not know whether or not the Federal elections have had anything to do with this change, but it seems to me that the majority of 13,000 or 14,000 odd electors in this State who have expressed their absolute want of confidence in this Chamber by agreeing to the referenda proposals may possibly have something to do with the difference in the tone of the debate this year as compared with last year. Further than that, I think the fact that a majority of some 13,000 or 14,000 people in this State still have confidence in the Labour party's methods and in their programme may possibly have had some weight in the speeches which have been delivered in this Chamber this session. It seems to me that members have been discussing the Labour Congress. They have not been giving as much time to the Governor's Speech as they have given to the Labour Congress which recently met at Fremantle. To me it is gratifying that such interest should be taken in this Chamber in the doings of the Labour Congress. I, for one, was very sorry that the Press were not admitted to that Congress. I would have liked to have seen the whole of the Press of the State, and I will go further and say that I would have been only too pleased to have sent an invitation to every member of this Chamber to be present at the Labour Congress, and I am sure if they had attended they would have come away with very much more enthusiasm and with many more altruistic ideas that would have enabled them to vote in the direction in which the Government are trying to shape their policy. Almost every member who has spoken to date has referred to the Labour Congress and there is no doubt that the programme that has been submitted by that Congress has aroused a great deal of interest on the part of members in this Chamber, as well as on the part of people throughout the

State. I wish to refer to one or two matters which were mentioned during the speeches on the Address-in-reply. One was by Mr. Moss in reference to Upper House reform. Mr. Moss stated that the Labour party are continually referring to this Chamber as a House of obstruction, and that we have no reason for referring to it as a House of obstruction. It may be that this Chamber has passed a considerable amount of reform legislation, and there is no doubt that many of the Acts we have in this State will compare favourably with many of the measures in any of the other States of the Commonwealth or of New Zealand, that is with reference to industrial legislation; but when I say that, I think it will be generally conceded that if this Chamber had not passed it or had not kept pace with the trend of public opinion in some respects it would have been a bad look-out for the Legislative Council. Further, there is one thing which must not be forgotten. Although the House may not be altogether a House of obstruction, which I am not going to concede because last session there was a good deal of obstruction in this Chamber as far as the Government's policy was concerned, while it may not be a House of obstruction in the way many say it is, it can also be a House of facility, and there is no question that this Chamber by one measure which it passed in 1910—I refer to the Redistribution of Seats Bill—showed that it was quite ready to give any facility to retain the other party in power in the other Chamber and to try to give them a perpetual lease of life. Therefore in criticising the House and the need for its reform we need not point to it as a House of obstruction only, but we should point to it as a House of facility for the passage of legislation which may not be desired by the people, for insofar as the particular Act I mentioned was concerned, I think the results show that the people themselves were not satisfied with the position taken up by this Chamber. Personally, I have always deprecated the abuse of the Legislative Council. I say that nothing is to be gained by going out and abusing this

Chamber, nor is anything to be gained at any time by abusing an opponent. To my mind the case against this Chamber as at present constituted is too strong for any abuse to creep in. I think that we can place a strong case before the country for the reform of this Chamber if not for its abolition, without resorting to any abuse whatsoever. Some reference has been made to the referendum, and in my opinion if a measure such as the Initiative and Referendum is carried, it will at once do away with the need for any Chamber elected upon a privilege or property franchise. To my mind such a Chamber as this, elected on the property franchise which exists at present, is simply a relic of past ages, and there is no doubt that in the very near future something will have to be done in the way of liberalising the franchise or of reforming the House altogether. In regard to the referendum we shall no doubt hear the views later on of members of this Chamber in relation to it, but I think there is no greater measure that can be brought forward to ascertain the will of the people than the referendum, and there is no better measure, to my mind, to do away with the intense party feeling that exists in this State, and in many other States than the referendum. I believe that with the introduction of the referendum it is possible upon a particular measure to so get the opinion of the people, quite apart from party methods that a very much better state of affairs will exist. To my mind, if the referendum was in existence to-day throughout Australia all these drawbacks and all these restrictions and hindrances which have been placed on the majority of the primary industries would be swept away. I believe that if the referendum was in operation to-day and was taken on one particular subject, such as the tariff, it would result in the sweeping away of many anomalies which are crippling and killing the primary industries of Australia. Reference has also been made to the Public Works Committee Bill and it was somewhat of a surprise to me to find during the last Federal elections that, despite the strong opposition put up against this Bill in this Chamber a mani-

festo was issued by the Liberal party to the effect that they supported this particular measure. The manifesto stated that, "A Liberal victory will adjust taxation to annual requirements, while a Public Works Committee and a Tender Board will see that the country gets a square deal and full value for its money." That statement is not a quotation from the policy of the Labour party, but is a statement issued over the name of Mr. Clarke James, secretary of the Liberal League of Western Australia, and it certainly was surprising to me to find such a statement in reference to the Public Works Committee Bill after the measure had been so strenuously opposed in this Chamber, and after the arguments which had been used to defeat it. It seems to me that the Liberal party have recognised at last that there is something to support such a Bill and that a Public Works Committee might do a good deal towards seeing that the country's money on behalf of public works is spent in a right way. Mr. Cullen made a proposal in reference to the Esperance railway which to my mind shows to what extreme lengths the opponents of this proposal are prepared to go in order to bring about its defeat. I suppose Mr. Cullen's is one of the most grotesque proposals that has ever been uttered in this House, that a line should go east and west to bring the produce of the Esperance district right around the Great Southern line to Albany. I cannot imagine a man putting such a proposal as that in good faith before the country, that we should build a line east and west and wipe out the natural port of Esperance simply to bring produce around to another port. It only shows to me what prejudice there is against the building of this particular railway from Norseman to Esperance. Why it should exist, I do not know. The country according to all accounts is capable of growing as much in the way of wheat as any agricultural lands in this State, and seeing that it will open up such a vast province in a country like this and a country in which we are saying we must settle our empty spaces, I for one cannot understand the prejudice and bias against this particular line. Whether or not the House will see fit to

pass it this session I do not know, but I sincerely hope that it will be passed. I hope the House will not further stultify itself by refusing to pass a measure such as this. It is all very well to say that hundreds of miles of railway are wanted in other parts of Western Australia, and that there are other places that require to be settled. The Esperance district needs to be settled equally as much as any other part of Western Australia, and what is more to the point the Esperance district is what they term a poor man's country, a country where a man can start with very little capital compared with what he would have to expend in some other parts of the State, and it would be a godsend to hundreds of men who are wasting their lives in the mines on the Eastern goldfields and who have no other means of getting away from the mines and earning a living elsewhere. If members would only look at the proposition in the right light or endeavour to do so, because I daresay each member gives his vote conscientiously, if members would only look at it in a broader spirit they would see that we have a province which is equal to anything else in Western Australia, and that we have a large number of men who are wasting their lives in the mines, men who cannot work much longer, but whose lives would be prolonged if they could go to Esperance, and this House would be only too pleased to pass the measure this session.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: There is plenty of room for them in the Great Southern.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I was referring, when the House adjourned, to the complaint about the lack of definiteness in the Governor's Speech. I find on looking up the Governor's Speech, that we have quite a number of items of policy, which, to my mind, are likely to give rise to as much debate in this House during the session, as has taken place in other sessions since Parliament has been in existence. There is Constitutional and Electoral reform, the granting of complete local option, the question of rights in natural waters and the irrigation and drainage of land; there are also proposed amendments of the Land Tax and Income Tax; amendments of the

Factories Act, a compilation of the Criminal Code and its amendments, initiative and referendum, an amendment of the Local Government Act, the regulation of traffic, the provision of uniformity in the valuation of land, and an amendment of the Mines Regulation Act. It seems to me in those items we have a big enough policy to keep the House going at quite a high pitch during the whole of the session of Parliament. I do not know what more members require in the way of policy for one session than what has been outlined here. I might refer to a few remarks made by Sir Edward Wittenoom in connection with the income tax, and I want to say that I believe an income tax is a much better means of raising revenue than many other forms of taxation in existence to-day, but when Sir Edward states that he favours an income tax in preference to all others and to land values taxation, I for one join issue with him. I believe that an income tax is not altogether a just tax, although it certainly is preferable to many other forms of indirect taxation, which we have in existence. To my mind, the income tax is a tax upon thrift, and, with the exception of the wages man and the man who is getting a salary, the income tax is in every case passed on; if it is not it can be dodged in such a manner that you cannot secure the payment of it, but so far as a man receiving wages is concerned, and the man receiving salary, there is no chance of his passing that tax on. The employer informs the Taxation Commissioner by medium of the reports which are sent out, and consequently the individual cannot pass on the tax. So far as land values taxation is concerned, I think it is generally conceded everywhere that that this is the most just form of taxation that can be imposed. I regret to hear so many remarks made in connection with land values taxation, that it is land taxation. It is not. They are two totally different things. We are only asking by advocating such a tax as this, that the public revenue should receive back some of that money that the public creates, and when the argument goes

out that we are endeavouring to tax the man on the land, those using that argument know little about the principle of land values taxation. This is not a hardship to the man on the land, except in this respect, that at the present time in this State and in most of the other States, we are up against a stone wall, so far as the principle of land values taxation is concerned. The Commonwealth has power to deal with the Customs and the States are dealing with the land. The time is coming when something must be done in the way of giving the Commonwealth Parliament power to deal with the land or to the States power to deal with the customs. A tax on land values is a substitutional tax and we who are enthusiastic in our efforts in urging this taxation upon the country, will not make great headway until some alteration is made. I believe that the system of land values taxation will have the effect of removing other harassing forms of taxation, which are pressing so heavily upon the primary industries of Australia, and they are really the only industries. When we can remove those forms of taxation and introduce land values taxation, we will do much to bring about a more just system, and by doing that, we will not only bring about a just system of taxation, but also cause to be opened up lands that are not now opened up, and put to the best possible use the land at present not being put to that use. It is the intention of the Government to introduce a Local Government Bill, and in that Bill we shall endeavour to allow of a system of land values taxation to the highest possible extent we can in municipal affairs, and I have no doubt whatever if we can bring that about we shall see the same results as are taking place in Sydney and in other cities of the world which are going ahead by leaps and bounds. There is no greater world political movement to-day than this. I wish to refer to one or two remarks made by Mr. Cornell—I am sorry he is not here this evening. Mr. Cornell has stated that Lloyd George in England left the principle of land values taxation in favour

of the principle of land nationalisation. I want to say that the man who desires to shuffle the whole question and who is anxious to avoid the issues is safe in leaving the principle of land values taxation in England and advocating land nationalisation, because he knows he is advocating something that cannot come to pass for many thousands of years, and is passing over something which could have been brought into operation at some earlier period. Lloyd George is safe in advocating land nationalisation as opposed to land values taxation, but had he gone on in the way he started in the famous Limehouse speech where he did much to increase his popularity he might have brought about the reforms which he appears so anxious to do. Mr. Moss has also made reference to the passing of increases in wages on to the country and on to the cost of living. This theory has been exploded so often that one hardly likes to refer to it again, but Mr. Moss has an idea that it is a fact that every increase in wages is followed by an increase in the cost of living, whereas all the statistics we can bring to bear show that the increase in the cost of living takes place first and that it is necessary to have an increase in wages to meet it. I have gone to considerable trouble to get particulars in connection with the increased cost of living and I have found that in almost every country in the world where there has been an increase in the cost of living, from 40 to 50 per cent. and even as much as 60 per cent., the increase in wages has rarely been more than 10 per cent. That shows conclusively that the cost of living increases first, and you must put up the wages afterwards. There is no doubt the way we are going, especially in this country, continually increasing our burdens in the customs, we are putting harassing restrictions on everything we use and eat, and everything we require to wear, and the cost of living must go up. Some day, when instead of building up those stone walls, in trying to establish artificial industries in a country of primary industries, we give more encouragement to the people

engaged in production we shall realise that we are getting near to settling some of our problems. I also would like to refer to a remark made by Mr. Cornell in reference to the crystallisation of the ideas of Ministers and others by their environment. I do not know whether I am giving away any secret of Congress when I state that I heard one man say to Mr. Cornell that he was a very different individual from what he was three years before, and when he was not a member of the Legislative Council. I was just wondering how far the environment of this Chamber had impaired that rugged radicalism, which we so much admire in Mr. Cornell. I do not know whether or not he is getting crystallised in that manner, in which he seemed to imply that Ministers might possibly become. I am sure it is the wish of every hon. member that Mr. Cornell will not lose that stern and rugged radicalism for which he is noted. I would like to refer to the question raised regarding the Arbitration Court. Some hon. members have an idea that we have not sufficient judges in order to carry out the work of the Arbitration Court, or at least in order to carry out the work of the law courts. I am not of that opinion. I believe we have in the four judges in the State, quite a sufficient number to carry out the work required of them, and I do not think the country would be warranted in going to the expense, and a fairly large expense too, of appointing another judge to meet the cause of justice at the present time: but it does seem to me to be farcical that a judge should be called upon to preside over a court such as the Civil Service Appeal Board, and that a judge should be there day after day hearing cases for an increase in the rate of wages. It seems to me that it is only reasonable that those approaching a court for increases in their salaries or wages, should approach the court which is established for that purpose, the Arbitration Court. Whether or not the Government will decide to introduce an amending Bill, I do not know, but personally I am of opinion that no matter in what position of life people may be

they should all go to the Arbitration Court in the same manner as the unions which are seeking better conditions and a higher rate of wages to-day. One matter I might mention before concluding is the wholesale charges that were made during the Federal elections of impersonation of votes. Throughout the country accusations were made of impersonation to the extent of several thousand votes, and these accusations seemed to be directed against one particular party, yet we find to-day that almost the whole of these accusations are untrue, and that instead of thousands the number has come down to about a hundred in each electorate, and probably when further enquiry has been made it will be found that even these few can be explained. But it is certainly significant that whereas these stories of impersonation were published broadcast and cabled all over the world and that there were leading articles of columns inserted in almost every paper in reference to these charges, yet to-day when it is found that only something like 100 votes in each electorate were impersonated, there are only one or two small paragraphs in the Press. I hope the time is soon coming when party feeling will not be so bitter as it is at the present time as not to be able to see that there may be some good on each side without each trying to show that one particular side has all the virtues and the other is responsible for all the vices.

Hon. C. McKENZIE (South-East): I desire to say only a few words. I was pleased to hear both Mr. Colebatch and Mr. Kirwan refer to the matter of education. This is a very important matter to the children of people in the outback districts. As members are doubtless aware, the people of Albany and surrounding districts are 340 miles from any secondary school and it is not all parents who are able to pay £120 or £130 per annum to send their children to either the metropolitan area or to South Australia in order to give them a chance of fitting themselves to fight the battles of life. In Albany at the present time the school arrangements are not quite what they ought to be. I have been a member

of the school board there for eight or ten years, and during that time we have always been struggling to get the things in a proper condition and see that the children are taught as well as the accommodation will allow. At present there are some in one portion of the town and some in another, but I understand that the Government have under consideration the purchase of certain property, which, if acquired, will afford plenty of room for the provision of proper accommodation. I saw in the Press some time back that the Education Department had under consideration the establishment of secondary schools at the different centres where they are wanted. I contend that one is wanted at Albany, and I hope that the Government will carry into practical effect their good intentions in this connection. Anything that will assist in bringing children up in a proper manner and give them a better chance in the world is highly laudable. In regard to the question of irrigation which we had before us last session, I am sure I am only echoing the sentiments of all members present when I say that they would be more than pleased to have a Bill come before them in such a manner that it can be passed with the least possible delay. Last session we appointed certain members of the Chamber to deal with the Bill, and they found some portions which were not suitable and recommended certain alterations which the Government did not see fit to accept. The Bill was not actually thrown out, but was withdrawn, and I trust that when it comes forward this time it will be in such a form that it can be passed by this Chamber without much delay, because it is a matter of great importance to the whole of the State. As far as my own district is concerned, we are at present getting rather more irrigation than we require, but that is from aloft. Another question which requires consideration is the neglect of that portion of the State lying between Denmark and Bunbury. There is a large tract of country well covered with valuable forests, and I believe the Government are going to work in a practical manner to

collect information in regard to the classification of the land and timber. We had a deputation to the Premier to-day, and his reply was most businesslike and satisfactory. Another little matter I would like to touch upon is the improvement of the various harbours. I see by the Speech that there is to be an improvement to the harbours at Albany, Bunbury, Fremantle, and Geraldton. I do not think that the Government can do better than deal with these matters, because no matter what produce the farmers grows it has to be sent away at the lowest possible expense and every extra penny in transport makes a big difference. At present, although we have had too much rain, the prospects are good, and I am glad to know that the Government have this harbour extension scheme under consideration. We cannot talk about their proposals until we see what they are, but I for one hope that they will carry their good intentions into practice and that the result will be a monument to their good government. The Traffic Bill of last session produced a good deal of discussion, and if it is to be introduced again I think there is room for improvement. If it is brought forward, I hope it will be in somewhat different form and that it will be speedily passed. We want roads and proper control of them, and of course we must pay for them just as we must for railways and all these things. Mr. Dodd referred to the work of the judges. When we passed the Arbitration Bill last session it was pronounced by several members to be simply perfect, and they were thoroughly satisfied with it, and I have seen mention in the other States of the fine Arbitration Act now operating in Western Australia. To-day we find that all sorts of things are wrong, that the Act is said to be not up to date, and that the unions cannot approach the court. I thought they could approach the court, but if there is to be any amendment I hope it will be such as will meet with the approval of hon. members. We have four judges and I believe they are really good men. They have plenty of work, and in connection with the civil service appeals, which I have been reading up, there must

be a lot of worry and much that requires consideration. At the same time I am certain that we have judges well capable of dealing with all these important matters that come before them. I do not think I have anything more to add. I desired just to refer to these two or three questions, and when the Bills I have mentioned come before the House, I will endeavour to do my best to put them on the statute-book, so long as everything is reasonable. Some of them have been held over from last session, but it is best to defer them until we get them right.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH (North-East): After reviewing the debate on the Address-in-reply of last session, and placing it alongside the speeches on the Address-in-reply so far as it has gone this session, we might almost congratulate the Government on the good work they have done in the interval. There is very little between the two debates, and one might easily say to the Government, "Go on as you are going, you are doing well for the country and you have the support of the Council." At least, that is the opinion I have formed from the very mild attacks that have been made upon the Government during the present debate. There are one or two matters I wish to refer to, and one is a remark made by Mr. Moss. That gentleman endeavoured to justify the existence of this Chamber by reading to hon. members a list of Acts now on the statute-book which were passed by this House. Mr. Moss did not tell us how he altered and remoulded the Bills before they became Acts to suit his own desires, which were contrary to those of most of the members sitting in another place and representing a vast majority of the electors of Western Australia. The same gentleman also referred to the industrial unrest in Western Australia. One might easily admit that there is some amount of unrest amongst labourites, when we take into consideration the long list that has been published of matters that are now awaiting hearing by the Arbitration Court. I was pleased to hear the remark made that everything possible was being done to push on with the work of the Arbitration Court, and that a num-

ber of cases will soon be heard. I think that more work should be done by the Arbitration Court than has been done, for if there is one thing that will affect Western Australia it is industrial unrest. I wish to see all the matters to be brought before the Arbitration Court dealt with as speedily as possible, so that master and man will be able to work amicably together. Reference was made to the decline in profits from the railways. According to the statistics this appears to be so, but I venture the opinion that the profits from the railways cannot very well show an increase while we are building more railways to the agricultural areas to support the farming industry.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: What nonsense!

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: Those railways cannot be expected to pay at the very commencement, and if they are run to suit the people they must for a little time at any rate show an amount of loss. I do not think this will always be the case. I think the time will come when the agricultural railways—every one of them throughout the State—will be a good paying proposition to Western Australia. But one must realise that when new railways are being constructed in sparsely populated districts they are run to suit the people, and must for a time at any rate show a loss. While on the subject of railways, I may say that during the last few days I have been out in a district where a new railway is in course of construction, that is the line from Wongan Hills to Mullewa, and there is not the slightest doubt that one must go among people who are residing 30 or 40 miles away from a railway to ascertain how they really are suffering from the want of railway communication, and the hardships they are going through.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: And yet you tax them!

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: I left this House on Thursday night, caught the Geraldton train at six o'clock, and journeyed to Coorow. The next day I went out with three or four others to a district named Latham's Rock, and met several of the settlers whom I know. They have been there for a number of years, with their families. Their children have not

yet had an opportunity of seeing a school. I know for a positive fact from what I saw myself, that these settlers are suffering great hardships. After battling for a number of years, they have done a certain amount to clear their land, and from what I could see the land is really good—some of the best in the State. The crops were looking splendid and gave every indication of being profitable this year. These people are glad to know that the railway is being constructed through their district, and there is no doubt that they will greatly assist to build up the wheat yield for this coming season. There are, however, many other districts also that are probably in the same position, and are likely to be until they receive railway communication, and I say we should make every endeavour to push on with our railways, although it must be admitted that the present Government are doing all they can to further the railways now in course of construction. I notice in the Governor's Speech that some care is being exercised with regard to settlement in the dry areas. I think the Government are wise in that respect, and I hope this will continue, because it is wrong, in the light of the sufferings of the people in whose district I have been during the last few days, living on kangaroo when they could get it—

Hon. C. A. Piesse: A very good dish.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: It might be so, but when you cannot get anything else for months it is pretty hard.

Hon. W. Patrick: They cannot get that every day.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: It was the first meat the man had seen for a number of weeks. He was pleased that a railway would be near his district so that some time or another he would be able to procure fresh meat and the necessaries of life. I must congratulate the Government upon sinking wells for the people in that district in particular. Previously it had been the policy to sink dams everywhere. I think that not sufficient interest has been taken by the powers that be from time to time in trying to procure water for these settlers by means of boring. As far as I went, and I believe as far as the

rabbit-proof fence, wells are being sunk by the Government, and a splendid supply of fresh water is being procured for the settlers, many of whom are sinking wells for themselves where they had dams previously. A good supply of fresh water will mean a great deal to settlement in that district. Mr. Lynn made a statement which, to my mind, was a very serious one, and I can hardly credit that such a thing should or did occur. When considering the statement of Mr. Lynn, and reading the statements that were made concerning the Federal elections throughout the Fremantle district, one can hardly credit that such a thing is correct, but I have been thinking over the matter during the tea adjournment, and I consider there must be something serious for such a statement to have been made. I have no doubt that when the Minister is dealing with this matter he will be able to clear it up successfully so far as the department are concerned. I think, myself, that the preferential system of voting is not all that can be desired, and I hope that when the new Electoral Reform Bill comes in that some other system will be put into operation which will prove efficient. I notice also in the Governor's Speech that mining is on the increase, and I am pleased to know that, because the mining industry has done a great deal to put Western Australia into the position this State occupies to-day; and I hope the Government will continue to assist the prospectors throughout the back country by erecting batteries wherever they are necessary. With reference to the Esperance railway, I supported the measure last session when it was before the House, and I will do so again. I will support the building of a railway anywhere in the State where I think it would be for the benefit of the people. I think railways should be pushed out first and the people placed alongside the line. If that were done the great hardships experienced by some of the people on the land would be greatly decreased. I do not intend to say anything further, except that there are many matters in the Governor's Speech, such as liquor traffic amendment, and land and income tax

proposals, upon which I will venture my opinions when they come before the House.

On motion by Hon. C. A. Piesse debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.12 p.m.

banking business or a portion thereof from the associated banks to the Commonwealth Bank of Australia? 2, If not, why not?

The COLONIAL TREASURER replied: 1, Not at present. 2, It is not convenient to do so.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 5th August, 1913.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: 1, By-laws of Roebourne water supply. 2, By-laws of Yilgarn road board.

By the Premier: Amendments (of various dates) to Public Service regulations.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to announce at this stage that I have nominated the members for Kimberley, Albany, and Coolgardie as temporary Chairmen for the session.

QUESTION — STATE'S BANKING BUSINESS AND THE COMMONWEALTH BANK.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Colonial Treasurer: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to transfer the State's

QUESTION—AVONDALE ESTATE, APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Mr. BROUN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How many applications were received by the Department for blocks of land on the Avondale Estate since October, 1911? 2, How many of these applications have been approved, and the area of same?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, No applications were received, as all the unselected portion of the estate has been reserved. The reservation, however, is now being removed, and the blocks—with the exception of the homestead and blocks adjoining—will be available for selection on the 6th inst. 2, Answered by reply to No. 1.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Mr. Heitmann and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 31st July.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE (Katanning): In common with other members sitting on this side of the House I listened with very great interest to the speech delivered the other night by the Premier, hoping that we and the country would receive in reply to the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition some explanation and clearer understanding in regard to several matters which should come up for consideration, and upon which the Government have been criticised through the Press of the country during the last few months. I refer, of course, to those matters, more particularly in connection with the State trading enterprises, affecting the finances