

ductive work. The rich finds there make it clear, I think, that this line will pay beyond others that have been proposed. This line also will be so much towards the completion of the trans-continental railway, so that, under any circumstances, the line will not be entirely wasted. I do not look on goldfields as resources of a permanent nature. They may be rich for a year or two, but in our instance we have satisfactory assurances that there is an enormous extent of gold-bearing country, extending 200 miles east to Coolgardie, to Dundas Hill on the South, and to Kimberley on the North; therefore, we shall not be incurring too great a risk in building this line. The line to the Murchison is double the distance of that proposed to Coolgardie, and, before it is constructed, hon. members ought to be afforded some information as to the character of the country it will pass through. The next important point is the line proposed from Donnybrook to Bridgetown. From my experience of the country, I would say the land can never be made an agricultural country, although it might become a fruit country; and I think we should be very careful before we approve of that work, unless it can be shown that by further railway extension the land can be made reproductive. With respect to the line to the coalfields, if it cannot be shown there is an unlimited supply of good coal, it will be our duty to pause before we approve of the work. I quite agree with the Hon. Mr. Haynes when he speaks of no mention having been made of a line or road from Dundas to Esperance Bay. That portion of the country has been most unjustly treated. There seems to be an idea here that making such a line would be the means of diverting the trade from this part of the colony, and this is considered to be undesirable. I think this is a mistaken idea, and an unfair idea, because many go to the fields by this route who would not incur the expense entailed of going from here. Esperance Bay is the nearest point to Dundas, and with a view to opening up that field it is fair that something should be done towards laying out the road. It can make no difference to this part of the colony, when once the people arrive at the goldfields, from which side they get there. The question of

the Land Bank is a subject for serious consideration. I can see many advantages to be derived from a bank from which farmers can obtain money. If it means a bank from which they can get sums of money to enable them to improve their holdings, it will be advisable to have it, but it will have to be well handled. Notwithstanding the cry of land being locked up in the hands of a few holders, if at any time any holder asks for the Crown price of the land, *plus* a fair sum for improvements, he cannot get it. I know an instance of a very desirable block of land being sold, with £2,000 worth of improvements upon it, for under £1 per acre; so that we must be careful how the advances are made. I know if I wanted to sell my holdings, and asked a fair value for the improvements, I could not get anything like their value. I do not think I need say anything further just now. I have the welfare of the country at heart, and I hope hon. members will give me credit for doing my best while I am here.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: In saying a few words in support of the motion before the House, I might point out that the Speech is of such a cheering nature that there is very little to say, except of a congratulatory character. In regard to railways, the line to Coolgardie is very much needed, and will receive my strong support. It will not only be of great advantage to the fields, but will be the means of opening up the pastoral lands which, from my own observation and the observation of others, I know are in the vicinity of Coolgardie. There are, I believe, hundreds of thousands of acres of good pastoral land, and it is simply a matter of water conservation—which I am glad to see the Government has taken in hand—in order to bring them into occupation. There is one work I should have liked to have seen included, and that is a branch line from the Williams — from the South-Western Railway. Although we have the Great Southern railway, portions of the district are not served by it. If we had such a railway, it would serve large numbers of settlers who are now cut off from communication. With regard to borrowing this amount of £1,500,000, it is a large sum of money, but it is necessary we should have it if we are to keep pace with the demand for the

further development of the colony; and I hope when next we meet we shall find ourselves in the position of wishing to borrow another million and a half, provided it is for reproductive works. With regard to the Land Bank, it will, no doubt, require a lot of caution in dealing with it. I think the word "farmers" is a misnomer, and if "tillers of the soil" had been substituted for it, it would have been better and would have done away with a lot of feeling against the scheme. There are thousands of acres of land in my district suitable for horticulture and viticulture, the owners of which would not come under the designation of farmers and thus be able to borrow from the Land Bank.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I shall not detain the House more than a minute or two. My chief object in rising is to offer a double congratulation—in the first place to congratulate the House on the members which have been added to it, and which, from the speeches we have listened to, and from the speeches we have not yet heard, but hope to hear—I believe, without any word of disparagement to the old House, will show, at all events, the new House, in seeking the suffrages of the people, has not, so far, done wrong. My first congratulation is to the House that they have now among them a band of members animated certainly by progressive feelings, although, if the utterances of a distant corner may be taken as an index, couched as they are in the most cautious mood, we shall not lack criticism. My second congratulation is to yourself, sir, and I offer it with the utmost heartiness and sincerity. I believe you are the oldest Parliamentarian present. Your parliamentary career, I believe, dates from 1870, many years before any other member of this House entered the old Legislative Council. I hope that the six years it will be your duty and pleasure to serve in the House will be years of dignity and impartiality—such impartiality as we have been acquainted with in the past—with happiness to yourself, and advantage to the House at large. And I do the more readily offer my congratulations, because I stand here as one of the small, attenuated band of survivors of the old House. I believe we are five, and of the five there are only two—Mr. Hardey and myself—who were with you,

sir, in the late Council as at first formed. Nevertheless, I believe that the more your conduct in the Chair is observed by new members, the more they will agree they have done a very fortunate thing in securing you as their President. I am not going through this Speech at length, for the reason that it does not contain anything, with the exception of the paragraph about the rain yesterday, that has not been heard of before, and upon which, including myself, all hon. members, with one or two exceptions, have not addressed their constituents; and if hon. members read the papers they will have learnt what are my views concerning most of the subjects referred to. I would, however, make one or two remarks of a general character. The Hon. Mr. Haynes has very justly uttered a protest—a protest of a most timely character—against the House considering anything from a parochial point of view rather than from a national one. That warning should be borne in mind, because, if I were to close my eyes and only listen to what hon. members were saying, I think I could guess what provinces they represent by the peculiar aspect of their remarks. For example, almost the very last speaker advocated the opening of a road from Esperance by way of a station—not one in which my friend, Mr. Dempster, is interested, but a station held by Messrs. Dempster Bros.—to Dundas Hills. It shows how broad are the views of the hon. member, for though he represents the East Province, his vision takes in so far a place as Esperance Bay. Then again, my friend, Mr. Haynes, has regretted there is nothing said in the Speech about laying down oyster beds at Albany—

THE HON. S. J. HAYNES: And elsewhere.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: And elsewhere. I hardly think the House has much to complain of because the list of the works to be constructed out of the loan does not include the stocking of Albany harbour with oyster beds, which the leading authority on this question (Mr. Saville-Kent) has told us can be done for £300. I refer to these two points to ask the House, in all seriousness, when these matters come before us, to bear in mind that it is the whole country we have to consider, and not a single