

THE HON. E. R. BROCKMAN: I have no intention, sir, of following hon. members in a reference to all the works suggested. One hon. member having made some allusion to the evidence taken before the Agricultural Commission, I thought I would just like to say a few words confirmatory of what he said. Before dealing with that, however, I should like to remark that we have reason to congratulate ourselves on the *personnel* of the first Ministry, and I may say it is my desire to see them continue in office as long as possible. The borrowing of a large sum of money quite meets my approval, but of course its mode of expenditure is what we have to look to. With reference to the evidence which Mr. Bush quoted, and which was given by a personal friend of mine, I shall say little, except that the gentleman who gave it was in rather a contradictory mood when he was examined, and I believe that he has since contradicted what he then said. Another gentleman who was then examined gave some strong reasons for the construction of a Railway to the Vasse, but it does not appear in the evidence. He was asked the lowest price at which he could produce wheat. He said he got 40 bushels to the acre, but could not sell under 5s. a bushel. I asked him if that meant at his barn door, and he said it did. I said, "Why you want a railway," and he replied, "Why, did you not ask me that question first." Then another friend of mine was asked what he thought the place was most suited for, and he said, "I think it is better suited to the production of children than anything else." There were a great many other amusing things said, but these I need not mention now; though really, sir, they held out no inducement for the construction of the railway to Busselton.

THE HON. R. W. HARDEY: I will make a few remarks on the Speech at the present time, so that they may be a guide to the Government as to my views. I am sorry to hear from what has been said that the people of the South have a very bad opinion of their own country. I always thought that they had good country. I for one should certainly support the line to Busselton, for I know the country is good and that the line is required. It must be remembered, too, that unlike other parts the route is

more or less populated. It has been said that the wants of these districts are supplied by the steamers; but there are many complaints about them, and they are not at all satisfactory if trade is to be developed. As to the question of harbor works at Fremantle, I shall be glad, if anything is done, to see the river mouth opened up. If that be not practicable then I should like to see Owen's Anchorage made the harbor. I think it would be a great pity to push on the Yilgarn Railway at the present time. What has been done at the fields up to now does not, in my opinion, warrant the line, and, moreover, I agree with the hon. Mr. Morrison that this should be made to form part of the trans-continental railway. With regard to the lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin, I also agree with the hon. Mr. Morrison that the work should be constructed by the whole of the Australian Colonies. Having referred to the principal of the Government proposals, I shall not allude to the rest until they are properly and definitely brought before us.

THE HON. J. H. MONGER: In reference to the Bunbury Railway I am not now in favor of it, and I do not know that I shall be. When I was there I asked a man what it cost him to grow potatoes, and he said about £1 per ton. I asked him what yield he got and he replied, "From six to eight tons per acre." I then asked him what he could deliver them for, and he said he could not do it under £6 per ton. He added, "I get that for them here where I dig them." I asked him if he could not let us have them at £4 per ton? He said he could not. The railway to the Eastern goldfields is, I think, premature. We want one thing there, and that is water. To obtain that I would be prepared to go to almost any extent, but as regards the railway I do not think it justified until we know something more definite. The other proposed works I will refer to when they come before us.

THE HON. E. HAMERSLEY: Of the gentlemen selected to form our first Ministry, I can only speak in the highest terms. A more able and conscientious body of men could not have been found in either the House or the Colony, and I fully believe they will meet with a large measure of support, but they must ex-

pect, and I do not doubt but that they will meet with, on one or two points, a fairly dissentient amount of criticism. With regard to the Yilgarn railway I quite agree with what the hon. Mr. Bush has said. The first thing is to secure a supply of water, and having done that we can consider the question of a railway. The Busselton railway I should throw out at once without any consideration, for it is not required. All the things mentioned in the Speech are of course very nice if we could afford them; but this is a work that, at any rate, we should leave till the last. As regards the amount of the proposed loan, I feel convinced that Ministers have gone into the question carefully, and it is possible that they are well acquainted with the cost of each of the works, but it seems to me a small amount for so many works, and I would prefer, if we are going in for public works, to see them carried out properly. However, we cannot control the other House—we can advise, but not control; still I should certainly like to see them obtain more information about these works, before agreeing to them, than is before us at present.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. member is quite mistaken in thinking that this House can do nothing.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): Allow me in the first place, sir, to thank hon. members for their kind expressions of opinion towards the other members of the Government and myself. I can assure them that the Government appreciate the good wishes that have been expressed, and I can only say that, in accepting office, we had only one object before us—to advance Western Australia, and bring forward such measures as would tend to develop the resources of the colony. The Hon. Mr. Hackett has referred to the latent resources of the colony, and the Hon. Mr. Leake has referred to the strangeness of the fact that these Eastern Goldfields were discovered just as the agitation for a change of Government took place. Now it is these resources that the present Government intend to do all they possibly can to develop. Of course the Government are open to fair criticism. We do not expect that every undertaking we propose will meet with the approval of hon. members; but when we bring forward those works

which are most urgently required for the development of the colony, we have done all that we can. At this time I do not think it is necessary for me to go into the details of each particular work, the proper time for me to do that being when it becomes my duty to lay the Loan Bill before hon. members. At that time I feel certain I shall be able to explain away a great deal of misconception that exists in reference to some of the works mentioned in the 8th clause of the Governor's Speech. The Hon. Mr. Morrison, in speaking of the Yilgarn Railway, said he considered it not right to call upon 40,000 people to contribute towards such a railway; but I think we shall do nothing with these fields until we provide some more convenient means of transit than exists at present. We have only to think of the enormous cost at the present time of conveying the plant, machinery, and supplies of food to these fields to see how it must cripple the mining enterprise. Again, look at the time it takes any person, after leaving York, to reach the goldfields and return; and this, too, prevents their development as rapidly as they otherwise might be. A railway there would also have the effect of preventing what is generally known as scrip mining, because then the owners of the mines would have an opportunity of going out and ascertaining for themselves what was being done. In reference to the vexed question of the Perth-Busselton Railway, although many hon. members have a great objection to it, I think when the Bill comes before them I shall be able to supply such information as will satisfy them as to the advisability of constructing the line. I cannot help thinking that the gentleman referred to by Mr. Bush must be a near relative of another gentleman who himself lived upon one of the most fertile portions of the country and yet who cried it down, and said it could not keep a sheep. Unfortunately for him some inquisitive person went up and inspected it, the consequence being that the country is now thickly populated. The information I think I shall be able to put before hon. members will show that there is good land there, which only wants a railway to develop it. Exception is taken by some hon. members to the Yilgarn Railway being constructed out of money borrowed