

be whipped up to do its duty is not encouraging land settlement, and is not helping the selector in a very sensible and practical way. I trust, therefore, that when the Government deal with the matter of placing the people on the land, they will look very carefully into the administration of the Lands office, and see that the men who get on the land are not discouraged by the red-tape, by the woodenness, and by the delays of the department here in Perth, whose object it should be to assist them in every possible way, instead of, as too often happens, placing obstacles in their path. Seeing that I am the only country member—that is, representing an agricultural and pastoral constituency on this (Ministerial) side of the House—I should like to say I shall continue to give the Government whatever support lies in my power as long as they on their part carry out the programme which they have enunciated in this House. It is a programme democratic in every sense, and I have yet to learn that you cannot find men quite as earnest, just, and enthusiastic in the cause of freedom in the country districts as in the towns. Possibly I may with a qualm hear some reference to the redistribution of seats; it may fall to my lot to be one of the massacred innocents; but whatever may happen in regard to that redistribution, I think we may rely upon it that this House in making that redistribution will take into consideration one circumstance with regard to country constituencies, namely the sacrifices country electors have to make in order to record their votes at the poll. Nothing astonished me more, coming from the experience of town elections as opposed to country elections, than the fact that in the fight during the recent contests men, and women too, were willing to travel their 20, 30, 40, and 50 miles merely to record their votes; and I venture to say that when in the country districts you have something like 95 per cent. of the available votes polled, those constituencies establish a claim for sympathetic treatment from this House, sympathetic treatment from the democratic members of this House, and from my friends the members at the back (representatives of the Labour party), because if there be one thing required in a democratic country in order to make its

institutions work properly it is that the voters shall display a practical interest in the politics of the country. The danger you have confronting you in the towns is that you have a sort of dry rot in political interest, for you cannot get the electors to come to the polls to vote, whereas during the recent contest—certainly in constituencies that came more immediately under my notice—I never found any indication of the lack of political interest, but on the contrary the very keenest interest in everything concerning the welfare of the country, and a determination on the part of each elector that when an opportunity allowed, he would make his voice heard in the policy of the State. I hope that point will be brought into view when the question of redistribution of seats arises.

MR. W. B. GORDON (South Perth) : It had not been my intention to speak on the Address-in-reply, but it occurred to me it would probably be discourteous not to acknowledge the invitation given to members on this side of the House—I take myself to be included amongst them—to go over to that (Government) side of the House, that invitation being given by the mover and also indorsed by the seconder of the Address-in-reply. In giving that invitation he held up the Governor's Speech, and said, "You gentlemen on that side of the House have been waiting a long time to decide on which side you will sit. You have heard our policy; now kindly walk over." We did not walk over. The inducement he offered was, "The people are all with us." I dispute that statement. If he had admitted or if they admitted that a certain section of the populace were with them, I would say that was correct. Some might designate that populace as the "crowd." I would not dare to do so, because the crowd invariably follows a circus, and the gentlemen who sit opposite are not of that class. Some members on the Opposition side have been twitted with having failed to go over to the side of the new Government; and we have been threatened by the mover of the Address-in-reply and also by the seconder, that if we do not go right over there now, we are to have a dissolution, and we shall then be sorry we did not go over.

MR. GARDINER: I did not say that.

MR. GORDON: Of the two evils, I should choose the lesser. The one evil, that of going to the country, may cost a few shillings: the other evil is that if we leave the Ministry in power long enough, even those now supporting them may not remain there. The followers of the Government practically admit that the Government policy is a weak one, but I would induce them to hold on; for it is an established fact that a weak baby will grow up a strong man, and I am satisfied that the generous members sitting on this (Opposition) side of the House will provide that baby with plenty of gruel. We on this side advise the Government to keep going; but I cannot recognise why the Premier or any other member of the Ministry should have a blind following from the people of Western Australia. Have they any record to entitle them to such following? We on this side, looking after the interests of the country, have a perfect right to watch them, and if they are doing good for the country to assist them. The Government should not only have the power to say "no," but also the power and pluck to say "yes," if it be a good thing they are advocating. At the present time there is a stand-and-deliver policy put before the people: "Give us all you have, or we will take it." That, I say, is a stand-and-deliver policy. If they advocate that long, they will not last long. When they get their breath, if they feel inclined to spend some of the money they are getting from the people, they may get a following of some members on this side of the House; but, with all due respect to them, I will maintain my side of the House until I am perfectly satisfied the Government are capable of carrying out the contracts which they profess themselves able to do.

[A pause ensued.]

THE SPEAKER: If no member wishes to speak, I shall put the question that the Address-in-reply be agreed to.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): I beg to move that the debate be adjourned.

MR. J. J. HIGHAM (Fremantle): I second the motion.

Motion put and passed, and the debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the PREMIER, the House adjourned at 8:39 o'clock until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 3rd July, 1901.

Question: Codlin Moth Inspection—Question: Patent Act Amendment, Assent—Question: Reformatories for Drunkards and Juvenile Criminals—Question: Soldiers Returned from South Africa—Motion: Royal Visit, Railway Fares—Papers: Camels Importation and Prohibition—Motion: Kurrawang Wood Syndicate—Address-in-reply to opening Speech, debate resumed and concluded, Address adopted—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—CODLIN MOTH INSPECTION.

HON. G. RANDELL asked the Minister for Lands: If he will inform the House of the opinion of the experts of the Agricultural Department as to the sufficiency, or otherwise, of inspection to protect orchardists against the introduction of the codlin moth.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. Sommers) replied: Every precaution will be taken to prevent the introduction of the codlin moth, and the proposed methods of inspection and disinfection at the ports of entry will be as complete as possible; but it will be necessary to increase the accommodation in order to give full effect to the proposed methods and secure efficiency.

QUESTION—PATENT ACT AMENDMENT, ASSENT.

HON. A. G. JENKINS asked the Minister for Lands: 1. If the royal assent has yet been given to the Patent Act Amendment Act passed by the Parliament of this State last session. 2. If