

in the northern portion of this State. While it is only reasonable and fair to ask the squatter to protect his area, is it so to ask him to protect the unprotected land for hundreds of miles around him? That would not be a fair thing, and no member would ask him to do it. All the squatter asks is that he should be allowed to protect his own holding—the land from which he gets his revenue and on which he pays interest. That is only fair and just, and I will be with the House in making him provide that protection. Some time ago it was stated that the Government intended to institute a State steamer service along the coast in order that the people in that part of the country should be able to get their produce to market at something approaching a reasonable rate. There was a great flourish of trumpets at the time, but, so far as I can learn, the scheme has fallen through: the trumpet burst. I am not inclined to say I would support the Government in putting on a State steamer to ply up and down the coast, but I think they should take some steps towards seeing that the rates and freights along that coast are kept somewhere within reasonable bounds. [Mr. Bolton: That can be done by competition.] Yes, if there were sufficient trade along the coast to warrant the competition, but in the circumstances competition is impossible. If the member would only look closely into the state of affairs along the coast he would find that to be so. Since we have to contribute towards the Federal mail service up and down the coast it was the duty of the Government, when the contract was being made, to see that a reasonable schedule of rates and freights was inserted. I hope the Government will remember this suggestion when the next contract comes before them for signature. The present contract will expire in a short time and a new one will then have to be prepared. I congratulate the Government upon attempting to throw a little more light upon the North-West coast. It is only by throwing light upon the country they can induce immigrants to go there. I hope the result will be that more immigrants will be attracted to that part of the country in a short time. The risks which

steamers plying, and people travelling, along that coast take they are little aware of; but none having the slightest idea of those risks would hesitate in congratulating the Government upon the steps they have taken. Not only will this work do away with the risks, but it will also save an enormous amount of time and, indirectly, lead to a reduction of rates. We are also pleased to see that the Government still intend to carry on the policy of building agricultural railways. I hope, however, they will hasten slowly, and will use their very best endeavours to settle all the land within a reasonable distance of the railways already built before constructing other lines which will be unsettled for many years. We have already a large railway system in the State and we have agricultural lands adjacent to the lines capable of carrying one million people, and yet we are going to spend more money in building extra railways to accommodate settlers, whereas we have not paid the necessary attention to the proper settlement of areas within reach of railways. Let us first settle those lands before building new railways.

Mr. J. BREBBER (North Perth): I am pleased to have the privilege of seconding the Address-in-Reply. Before dealing with the Speech itself I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on again presiding over this Assembly. I wish to congratulate the Government upon the important legislation they have foreshadowed in the short Speech presented to us. The question of amending the Constitution Act is referred to first of all, and the object of the amendment is to place the franchise of the Upper House upon a more fair and equitable basis. I am pleased to see that the Government have taken that course, but I regret they have not gone farther and proposed to make a considerable reduction in the number of members of both Houses. Considering the population of the State we are over-represented with 30 members in the Legislative Council and 50 members in the Legislative Assembly. When the Government are considering the alteration of the Constitution Act they might also consider the question of

putting the electorates on a fairer basis. Take the electorate I represent. The new roll will contain 9,000 names. I consider that an electorate with a roll of that size should have at least a second representative. On the other hand there are electorates whose size could be advisedly increased. The numbers in the electorate of the hon. member who moved the adoption of the Address-in-Reply (Gascoyne) might very well be raised with advantage to the State and with no disadvantage to the hon. member. I think these are matters the Government might very well take into consideration if they are amending the Constitution at all. Again I would like to congratulate the Government on the proposal to bring forward a Bill for the better regulation of the liquor traffic in this State; and I am pleased to see they are moving in the direction of gathering information from unbiased sources in New Zealand and the other States; because then we will be in a better position to judge what is the best measure to bring in to regulate that traffic. I also congratulate the Government on carrying on the policy of extending agricultural railways. I think it has been, if not the most successful, at least one of the most successful policies any Government has brought into force since the establishment of Responsible Government in this State. I should like to point out where the success of this policy is so pronounced. The area under crop has increased by 124,400 acres since 1906; and since this Government took office the export value of wheat increased by £96,675, that of flour by £34,372, and that of lambs and mutton by £5,586. The value of the export of these commodities last year was £136,633; and seeing that we have 124,400 acres more under cultivation than when these exports were made, we can reasonably expect a great advance next season. We are justified in believing that our export trade will advance in proportion to the greater area of land brought under cultivation. There can be no greater justification than these figures for the policy the Government have adopted in sending out spur railways into the agricultural areas. An-

other thing I would point out is that this increase in our agricultural industries has taken place in the face of the financial difficulties arising between the Commonwealth and this State. It is unnecessary for me to say that this State as a whole recognises that we are not getting a fair deal from the Commonwealth with regard to our finances. Our finances have been crippled by the Commonwealth. The Federal authorities have taken from us the very sinews on which we built up the prosperity of the State and are appropriating them for use outside this State. Yet some of our Federal representatives have the audacity to say to us that it is far better for the State to so appropriate these sums of money than to frivolously spend it for the purposes of the State in extending railways to our agricultural districts to bring returns to the State such as I have pointed out to the House to-day. I say our representatives in the Federal Parliament are not doing justice to this State. They are not looking after the interests of this State. They have not done what they should have done or what was expected of them by those who sent them there. I wish to draw attention to a few other difficulties the State has had to contend with and overcome. The Government has been face to face with two huge labour strikes, one in connection with the timber industry, and the other in connection with the supplying of firewood to the mines. Both strikes were brought to a very successful termination by the judicious mediation of the Government. The Ministry deserve every credit for settling these huge labour disturbances and for saving the State an expenditure which was pressing upon the industries and the people more than would be expected considering the number of people engaged in the troubles. I would like, before sitting down, to draw attention to the depression supposed to exist here at the present time. We must recognise that the city and large towns of the State are going through a period of serious depression, but I am glad to say that period cannot last. Our agricultural, mining, timber and coal in-



dustries are increasing every day, and it is impossible to conceive that these primary industries should prosper as they are doing without at the same time benefiting the city, the large towns, and the community generally. I look forward with certainty to the time when the tide of prosperity in the agricultural, mining, and timber industries will flow into the towns and benefit the country as a whole. I do not think it is advisable to continue a speech of this sort to any great length. The session is intended to be a short one, and it is advisable for us to get it over at the earliest possible date so as to give us an opportunity, as is suggested in the Speech, to go to the people, and that before important legislation is introduced the views of the people upon it should be heard and their mandate expressed on election day. I have very much pleasure in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Premier moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until the next Tuesday, at 4.30 p.m.

Question passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at 4.15 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

## Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 28th July, 1908.

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

Prayers.

#### Swearing-in.

*Hon. C. J. Piessé* (South-East), who was absent at the previous sitting, took the oath, and subscribed the Roll.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By *the Colonial Secretary*: Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902—Return of Registered Industrial Unions, 31st December, 1907; The Land Act, 1898 (Section 109)—Resumption from Pastoral Leases; Cemeteries Acts, 1897 and 1899—Notices and By-laws published under the provisions of the Cemeteries Acts; Land Act, 1898, and Amendment Act, 1902—Timber Tramway Permits; Fishing and Pearl Shell Industries for year ending 31st December, 1907—Report on; Regulation relating to the management and control of Gaols and Prisoners; Fremantle Harbour Trust Regulations; Superintendent of Labour Bureau—Report of for year ending 31st December, 1907; Roads Act, 1902, Public Works Department—By-laws of the following Road Boards:—Nullagine, Marble Bar, Victoria Plains, Yalgoo, Nelson, Brunswick, Marble Bar, Beverley, Minilya, Northampton, Geraldton, Kelmscott, Northam, Kojonup, Perth, Upper Chapman; Government Railways Refreshment Rooms, By-laws under; Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907—Regulations.

#### COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motions by *the Colonial Secretary*, Sessional Committees were appointed as follow:—

*Printing Committee*—The President, Hon. G. Randell, and the mover.