

with such votes, but after giving the Act close study I can see where it would be possible for a biased presiding officer to manipulate the papers successfully without any chance of being detected. There are several other matters I intended to refer to, but I will take the opportunity later on, when the Bills come before this House, to deal with them.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE (North-East): In common with all other members I would like to offer my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on once more being returned as a member, and also upon your reappointment to the high and honourable position you hold. Members are under a debt of gratitude to the electors of the West Province for re-electing you. We can congratulate those electors for doing so, as it has given us the opportunity of once more placing you in the Chair to preside over our deliberations. I would like to welcome the new members of this House. I would mention more particularly the member who has been returned for a goldfields constituency. I refer to the hon. member for the South Province. As a very old resident of the Eastern goldfields I know the reputation Mr. Dodd holds on those fields. I know, and most people living on the goldfields know, that it is owing to the moderate course he has adopted on most questions there that we have had peace in the industries of the fields. Had it not been for the fact that we had a gentleman there who had those moderate views there would have been strife very long ago. Therefore we are to be congratulated on getting a member of the calibre of Mr. Dodd, who now represents a certain section of the community which has had but very few representatives in this Chamber in the past. We have a gentleman who will be able to put the views of that section of the people before us with all fairness, and through his agency we will be well aware what the opinions of that section are. Allow me to offer my congratulations to the Premier of this State on the high honour which has been conferred on him. One member maintained yesterday that in all probability when the Premier reached London he

found that things were very much better in the London Agency than he expected. Let me differ from that member. It is not long since I was in London, and I was not at all satisfied with the way things were conducted in the London agency. It was an admirable move on the part of the Government to get the Premier to go to London, and I hope that now he has been there, and has become conversant with the way things are conducted, there will be a distinct improvement manifested in the working of the agency. The great personality of the Premier has, I feel sure, done a great deal of good for Western Australia. There is no doubt it was his personality and ability that forced him into the limelight immediately after his arrival in London, and he remained in that limelight until he left the old country to return here. I hope that now the Premier is back he will throw that energy into the affairs of the State he exhibited before he went away, and that matters will go on prospering as much now as they have done since he has been Premier. Coming to the Speech of His Excellency, after one has read it one can only come to the conclusion that it is a very comprehensive and ambitious programme to be placed before us. One member has said there is very little to be found fault with, while another has said that the Speech covers the whole of the industries of the State of Western Australia, and I am inclined to agree with both members. There is no doubt that the record, as described in the Speech, of the work done during the past twelve months and of projected works for the coming 12 months is a very comprehensive one. The Government and the people generally are to be sincerely congratulated on the fact that this State has evidently turned the corner. For some years we were under a cloud of depression, but that cloud seems to have become dispersed and we are on the high road to prosperity. Everyone seems optimistic and, I think, justifiably so. There is no doubt that land settlement here has done, and is going to do, great things for us. Let me say here, as an old resident of the goldfields, one who has



spent 15 or 16 years of the best years of his life there, that nothing pleases me more, nor pleases the right-thinking and sensible people on the fields more, than to know that the agricultural districts of the State are in a prosperous condition. There is no jealousy on the part of the goldfields people because of the prosperity of the people on the coast, and we want the people on the coast to feel the same towards the great goldmining industry we are carrying on. In addition to its being very pleasing to learn that the agricultural districts are so flourishing, it is equally pleasing to know that many other industries in the coastal districts are also flourishing. The Speech mentions that the horticultural industry is in a very prosperous condition. We are told that during the past season Western Australian fruits topped the market in London on every shipment. We have shown the people of London, of the Continent, and the rest of the world that we can grow fruit and ship it to them and command the highest prices. This is a very great thing for Western Australia and it will encourage the fruit-growing industry. I believe we have a very large tract of country in the South-West capable of growing fruit suitable to ship to the London market. In the great programme the Government are placing before us there are many very important items. I notice it is the intention of the Government to carry on the policy of agricultural railways. These railways have always had the support of the goldfields members, and I am sure that the Bills to be brought down later on in the session will receive the support of the goldfields members—that is those Bills having for their object the opening up of more agricultural districts by means of railways. We are also told that the Government will spend a large amount of money in building grain stores and in adopting modern methods of shipping grain at Fremantle. This scheme will also have the support of goldfields members because we realise that in connection with this great grain-growing industry we have there must be the most modern and effective methods of shipping if we are to compete successfully with the

outside world. It was interesting to listen to Mr. Patrick when he described to us the methods of shipping wheat in bulk. Two or three years ago I travelled through the great wheat-growing States of America and Canada and noticed that there was no handling of wheat in bags there, but that it was all dealt with in bulk. I think there are difficulties in the way of introducing the bulk system here and the Government are wise to give every consideration before going to the expense of instituting that method. It would, perhaps, be wise of them to appoint a Royal Commission to go into the matter before deviating from the present method. While I am prepared to congratulate the coastal people on the great measure of prosperity which appears to have come to them. I am sorry to say that, as an observant man a man who visits the Capital very frequently, and who has an opportunity of meeting a great many of the commercial and leading citizens of Perth, I find that among all this prosperity there appears one little rift in the lute. I will describe this later on and will ask for the sympathy of the coastal people towards the first great primary industry of this State; I refer to the gold-mining industry. It has been significant that in almost every speech made in this House during the present session there has been very little reference until to-day to the great mining industry. Is it that hon. members have forgotten that the gold mining industry is the primary industry of Western Australia? Have they forgotten what that industry has done for Western Australia, or is it that they consider that the mining industry is well able to stand on its own bottom and does not require assistance from members in this Chamber?

Hon. F. Connor: Water schemes, etcetera.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: The water scheme, and other things, have done more for Western Australia indirectly, probably, than anything that can be mentioned. I ask, whether hon. members have forgotten this great mining industry. I hope that such is not the case, because they must realise that the

industry was one that lifted Western Australia from a state of little importance indeed, into what it is to-day with its population of 280,000 people. It was owing to the discovery of gold that people flocked to this State, and it has been owing to the large consuming population on the goldfields that the impetus was given to the agricultural and pastoral industries of the State. The goldfields have for many years afforded a splendid market to the producers of grain, mutton, fruit, and vegetables, and for fish. I just want to give a few figures in connection with the mining industry. My desire is to show that it is not the decaying industry we are given to believe it is by men holding prominent positions in this fair State of ours—

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Can you give their names?

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: Yes; it is not a difficult matter to give their names. I want to point out that during the last 20 years the gold mining industry has produced 95 millions sterling, and that this industry which is being decryd now, employed in 1909 18,336 men. It is a well known fact, and statistics will prove it, that by multiplying the number of men employed on the mines by four you will get the number of people who are supported by the mining industry, and thus we have a population of 73,000 people existing on the mining industry. These 73,000 people who are living on the goldfields of Western Australia are all large consumers, and it is owing to the splendid market they have given to the agricultural producers that the agricultural industry has progressed and prospered as it has done.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: The figures you have given are exclusive of Government officials.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: Oh, yes. In addition to the mining industry there are many allied industries which employ a great number of men. For instance, there is the wood industry on the goldfields which is a very important one and employs very many men, and then we

have foundries and various other factories in Kalgoorlie and other centres, as well as in Perth and Fremantle, which are supported by the mining industry. It is true that the output of gold has fallen away during the last six years. The output for last year was worth £6,800,000; six years ago it was worth £8,800,000, a shrinkage of two millions. But then, as members have pointed out, the number of men employed on the goldfields is more than it was six years ago, and the tonnage of ore treated is a great deal more than it was six years ago, while the State is getting more benefit from the smaller output of gold to-day than it was six years ago. The dividends paid last year totalled £1,360,000. I am just going to give a few of these figures because they are big figures, and want to be brought before the attention of members who are not connected with the mining industry to make them realise what that mining industry means to Western Australia, and to try and get their sympathy towards helping that industry along.

The Colonial Secretary: The Government are not unsympathetic towards the mining industry.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: As an observant man who has mixed with leading commercial and professional people of Perth and Fremantle, I say there are a large number of people down here who are not sympathetic towards the goldfields. It is a notorious fact that there are many men who have made fortunes on the goldfields, and who have gone away from them and have done nothing to assist those goldfields, and that when they have got away they have commenced to decry them. A short time ago a gentleman who was aspiring to political honours in the Federal arena, stated publicly in this State that it would not be long before all those people who had sufficient money to get away from the goldfields would be tumbling over each other to make their exit from the goldfields, and that there would be many who would not have sufficient means to get away. I say that is a deliberate and misleading statement.



Hon. J. W. Langsford: It was not Mr. Kingsmill.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: No.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Is that the only case you have?

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: There are other cases. Not so long ago a gentleman holding a high municipal position in Perth, speaking at a dinner, made a remark that the goldfields—I do not remember the exact words—but the inference was that the goldfields were on the down grade. At the same time he expressed the desirability of building Perth up as much as possible. He evidently did not realise that it was the prosperity of the goldfields and the agricultural districts, and the various industries of the State that would enable Perth to be built up, and that if the various industries did not progress Perth could not be made to advance. We also read in the daily papers quite recently of another aspirant to political honours in a country district, who told the people we had come to a parting of the ways and we would have to give all our attention to the agricultural industry, which was the backbone of the State, because the gold industry was on the decline. I could give many other instances. I have conversed with men holding good positions in the State who have decried the gold-mining industry and who are prone to throw the mining industry aside just as they would a sucked orange, having got all the good possible out of it, and having no further use for it.

The Colonial Secretary: That is not the attitude of the present Government.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: I will refer to what the Government have done, but I want to give my ideas as to what ought to be done to encourage the gold-mining industry in the near future. I would like to say that the present Government have done a good deal to assist the mining industry, and I hope they will go on doing the good work which they have commenced, but there has been a want of energy even on the part of the present Government. The Mines Department, as far as I can see, have not got the same amount of energy that they had a few years ago. I think, to a very great ex-

tent, this is caused by the fact that the whole of the Mines officials have been stationed in the city. The environment of Perth is really too much for them. The Perth people are not interested in mining, and the consequence is that the officials of the department, mixing with the Perth people, do not get that incentive from them to try and improve the industry that they would get if they mixed with the people who are actually working or who are engaged in the management or control of the mines of the State. I do not say that it is possible to move the Mines Department bodily from Perth and put it in a different environment, but I say the Mines Department can be shaken up to a great extent. Not so many weeks ago, in speaking to an officer in the Mines Department who had been stationed on the goldfields for a long time, this officer admitted that now that he had been in Perth for two or three years he had not the same interest in the industry that he had when he was stationed on the goldfields. I think that applies to most of them. We have the Under Secretary in Perth who rarely visits the goldfields. If we were running a big commercial concern we would not have the manager 400 or 500 miles away and keep him there doing his business by correspondence. There is also the State Mining Engineer who sits in his office in Perth, and who ought to be on the goldfields or spending seven-eighths of his time on the goldfields. Then there is the manager of the State battery system who spends a great deal of his time in Perth, while there are many other officers who are always to be found in Perth and whose business should be principally on the goldfields. I think if the officers of the Mines Department were given to understand that they must keep themselves in touch with the industry and make frequent visits to the goldfields and meet the people who are developing the industry, it would be much better for that industry. The Government of Western Australia have done a great deal with the system of State batteries. I have travelled a good deal through the goldfields, and I have inspected most of the State batteries on the Eastern Goldfields during the past few



months. I find that the Government have spent £280,000 on these batteries, and that they have been the means of producing three millions sterling in gold since they were first established. The batteries have done a great work and I believe they will go on doing a great work, but at the same time I say that those responsible for the management of them should get about a little more to see what is being done, and to see that the prospectors and the men who are using them get a fair deal every time. I think if that were done there would be a good deal more satisfaction among prospectors. A more liberal policy should be adopted by the Mines Department in connection with providing outfits for prospecting parties. The prospectors of Western Australia have not all left the State; there are still a few of them about, and they want help. They are a peculiar class of the community; they do not come to you and ask to be helped; they are men who have to be hunted up and offers made to them to provide them with outfits. The Government own a number of camels and horses on the goldfields, and most of the time these camels and horses are idle in paddocks. Greater use might be made of them, and prospectors ought to be provided with them.

The Colonial Secretary: We provide camels if they are wanted.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: Probably if we fitted out more prospecting parties we would have more new finds. Then again I think there should be a system of lending moneys to prospectors to equip their leases. It is perhaps more difficult to lend money to a prospector than to an agriculturist; in the one case we have the land and improvements, but in the other case it is perhaps more a speculation than an investment. But surely with an industry such as the gold mining industry we can afford to be speculative, and to take some risks. On the goldfields the business people have to take risks, and I think the Government would be justified in taking a certain amount of risk in helping this industry along. There are many other ways in which the gold mining industry might be helped; one could spend a lot of time in talking about

the way the industry could be helped along; but there is one method I would like to mention, and that is in connection with the Geological Department. Not long since a deputation from the Chamber of Mines at Kalgoorlie waited on the Minister for Mines and outlined a scheme to improve the Geological Department, which would very likely help to open up new auriferous country. It would be worth members' while to get the report of that deputation and read it, because it was a practical proposition by practical men, who showed how it would be possible, by having a proper Geological Department in Western Australia, for prospectors to know when they got into a certain part of the country whether it was any use prospecting for gold there or not. The Geological Department is now very much undermanned, and those in charge of it have been spending most of their time in the North-West, and not in the known auriferous belts of the Eastern Goldfields and the Murchison. Another way to help the gold mining industry would be to have a system of putting down bore holes. These could be put down, and pegs put in where there was a bore, and maps could be prepared showing the information derived from the borings taken out, and these records could be kept in the Mines Office, so that when a prospector wished to sink on any ground where there was a bore put down, all he would have to do would be to take the number of the peg, go to the office and get all the information possible. It would probably save him a great deal of time, and he would not have to sink a shaft without having some idea of what he was going to get when he sunk. I think the industry might be assisted also by the lowering of the railway freights. I believe the time has arrived when the railway freights might be revised. They are particularly heavy on the goldfields in many instances, and I know it is a very serious matter to small leaseholders very often to have to pay the heavy railway freights on machinery, so that I think it would be wise on the part of the Government if they had the whole of the railway freights put under revision, and if in



many cases they were reduced. There are just one or two other matters I would like to mention. One is in connection with the pastoral industry on the goldfields. A few months ago the Minister for Lands made a trip on the Eastern Goldfields. It was the first trip he had made to the north of Kalgoorlie, and I accompanied him. The Minister was very much struck with the possibilities of the country to the north of Kalgoorlie from a pastoral point of view, and I believe it is his intention to visit the goldfields again and inquire into its possibilities more closely than he did on his last visit. It was just about the time he visited the goldfields that I noticed that the Imperial Government expressed the intention of establishing horse-breeding ranches in various parts of the Empire. Australia was mentioned, and South Africa, and Canada, and one or two other places; and it struck me that if they were going to establish a ranch in Australia the Eastern Goldfields between Kalgoorlie and Murchison would be very favourable for the purpose. A lot of horse-breeding goes on there now, and I am told it is a splendid climate for horse-breeding. It would be well for the Government to keep this in view should the Imperial Government decide to carry out their intention of establishing a horse ranch in this part of the world. Another point on which I wish to dwell is in connection with the railway policy of the Government. It is well known that I am connected with what is known as the Esperance Railway League. I have been a supporter of the Esperance railway for the last 16 or 17 years, and I believe that the people from Esperance right through Norseman to the Eastern Goldfields have not been well and fairly treated in regard to that railway. I believe that many years ago that railway was practically promised to them by the then Premier.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Who was that, Sir John Forrest?

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: Yes.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Never, never!

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: We were given to understand that when Sir John Forrest made his memorable visit to Esperance he promised it.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: No, not a syllable; I know it too well.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: At all events a great deal of money was spent in Esperance at that time in the way of erecting jetties and warehouses and so on, which led the people to understand that the Government had some idea of building a railway from Esperance into the interior. It is a question which is agitating the minds of the people of the goldfields to a large extent to-day. I have supported, as I have said, this railway for the last 16 or 17 years, and I see no reason to withhold my support from the railway to-day. My principal reason some years ago for wishing the railway to be built was that Esperance would provide a suitable health resort for the large population on our goldfields. From this point of view it is more important to-day that the railway should be built, because in addition to the large male adult population on the goldfields, we have now a large number of women, and a lot of children growing up, and surely the health of the women and children of the goldfields is worth a little consideration on the part of the Government of Western Australia. The climate of Perth and the surrounding seaside resorts is not suitable for the women and children of the goldfields to come to. We have that on the authority of the medical men on the goldfields.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: What is wrong about it?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is the same latitude.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: It is too much of the same sort of climate as we have on the goldfields. Albany, which is looked upon as being an ideal climate, is too far by rail, and it is too expensive for most people to make the journey. We can reach the coast of the Southern Ocean, where there is almost the same climate as they have in Albany, by a journey of 220 or 230 miles to Esperance. Surely for this one reason alone it would be worth while building the railway. Years ago when we supported it there was no railway from Coolgardie to Norseman, but to-day half the distance has been



bridged by a railway, and there is now only 120 miles to be completed to the coast. The railway would not do any harm to the interests of Perth and Fremantle, while being very convenient to the people of the goldfields. At all events, as a goldfields man, I appeal to the people on the coast to build this railway. Even if it did not pay when built, I would still urge that the line be built from the health point of view alone. Although I have not travelled through the district, during the last few months I have met a number of men who have spent weeks, and some of them months, in prospecting for agricultural areas in that district. I am sure if many members of the House could only hear the earnest manner in which these people talk of the agricultural possibilities of the land there, they could not fail to be convinced of the quality of the land. As for the advisory board, which the Minister hurried through the district, doing 120 miles in two or three days, their report can only be looked upon as a farce. The members of the board will admit they had no opportunity to examine the land, and had very little better knowledge of it than they had before they started from Norseman. The Government should take steps to see the extent of the agricultural land between Norseman and Esperance, and if they find there is land suitable for agriculture they should build the line at once. I would go further and say that, even if the land is not so good as it is described to be, the line should be built, because Esperance is the natural port of the goldfields, and it would be the means of conserving the health of the vast population of women and children on the goldfields. That is all I have to say in connection with the mining industry. The Esperance railway is a matter that will be brought before the Premier in a few days, when no doubt it will receive every attention from him. We anticipate getting a favourable reply from him, and we anticipate that the line will be built in a very short time. I would like to say something now in connection with some remarks made yesterday by a member in regard to the Western Australian Fire

Brigades Board. I have the honour of being a member of the board, and I take this opportunity of making a few remarks on the work the board have done since the Act came into operation. The remarks made by one hon. member yesterday go to show that a considerable amount of discontent exists among the smaller municipalities in the metropolitan area, and among some roads boards, owing to the operations of the Act. It is true that the Act was only assented to in the latter portion of last year, and that the necessary *Gazette* notices were only made in February, and that the Act only came into operation on the 1st of March. The burden of the complaint of the municipalities, according to the hon. member who spoke yesterday, is that they have to provide the amount to meet the levy made on them by the board for fire purposes, and they say that in many instances the amount the board ask for exceeds the amount of the rates collected for the year by the particular roads board or small municipality. If that is correct I can only say these local governing bodies levying that small rate are making it somewhat light for the ratepayers, because the amounts levied by the fire brigades board are in very many instances quite a small sum in comparison with the protection the board are giving. The hon. member mentioned that in some cases the amount the board levied exceeded by three times the amount the local governing body had been in the habit of spending on fire protection. I have no reason to doubt that; but if it is the case, the local governing bodies have not been doing their duty by the ratepayers, because if they had fire protection for the paltry amounts mentioned, in some cases £20, the fire protection could not have been of a very adequate nature, unless the amount were supplemented by other means. Fire brigades in many municipalities and roads boards, in addition to getting small amounts from the municipalities and roads boards, have been in the habit of going round for contributions from the ratepayers and getting up entertainments to help the funds of the brigades, and they have also been going cap in hand to

the Government and getting assistance. When the Fire Brigades Board was created it was intended to do away with that, so that there would be no longer any need for the brigades to go to the Government, or to the residents of the districts, cap in hand, for contributions, and no reason for them to get up entertainments to swell their funds.

(Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.)

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: When we adjourned for tea I was speaking about the Fire Brigades Act. Quite recently in another place a question was asked the Government, whether they intended to repeal this measure or amend it. The reply given was that the Government intended to do neither. This Act was only brought into force in March of this year and it has not had time to have a proper trial given to it. I should say before trying to amend the Act we should give it a fair trial. A great deal of time was given to this measure by a select committee and a large number of witnesses were examined. It is not quite correct to say that none of the mayors or town clerks of the various metropolitan municipalities had an opportunity of giving evidence before that committee, because, if I remember rightly, the town clerk and mayor of North Fremantle were called in addition to the mayors of Fremantle and Perth, and a number of other residents was examined and a good deal of time was given to the consideration of the measure, and it was thought that it left this Chamber as perfect as we could possibly make it at that time. I am prepared to believe that it will be necessary in the course of time to make amendments, but that time has not yet arrived. It is only fair to give an Act a trial before anything serious is done in the shape of amending it. It is prepared to admit hardships are inflicted on some of the roads board districts, and in some of the smaller municipalities within the metropolitan area. These hardships I hope we shall be able to rectify and probably make some adjustment this year, and the next year these small roads boards and municipalities will be able to approach

the Governor-in-Council and appeal to get their area restricted, or get it taken out of the jurisdiction of the board altogether.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Why not adjust it at once?

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: I say we may be able to give them some redress during the present year, because all the members of the board realise that some hardship has been inflicted on some of the roads boards and smaller municipalities. Taking them as a whole I think they are getting a good service for the amount of money they are being asked to pay. I look on the measure as one quite justified, and one which will do a great deal of good to the State. It is compelling the insurance companies to contribute a fair proportion towards the upkeep of the brigades, for these companies have been getting the services of the brigade up to the present time without any cost. In reply to the member who brought the matter forward yesterday, I say we ought to give the Act a fair trial before doing anything in the shape of amending it.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Will the board assist in getting some of the roads boards who are hardly treated exempted?

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: Some of the goldfields boards have waited on the Minister who controls this Act, and he has asked that two members of the board should consult with him and see if some redress cannot be given. I have much pleasure in supporting the Address-in-Reply.

Hon. T. F. O. BRIMAGE (North-East): Like other members I wish to express regret at the loss of our late King, and also to congratulate the present Monarch on ascending the throne. We have in him one who thoroughly understands the British Empire because he has travelled so much. I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your re-election. I do claim that in yourself we have a gentleman fitted for the position, and who uses intelligence in carrying out his duties. With regard to the Governor's Speech, I think it is the longest one I have heard during the 10 years I