

# Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 3rd August, 1926.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTIONS (3)—RAILWAYS.

### Yarramony-Eastward Line.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Premier:—1, Is he aware that the four statistical areas, the centre of which the authorised Yarramony eastward line is to traverse, contributed one-fifth of the total wheat yield of the State, namely, 4,023,888 bushels? 2, In view of this splendid contribution to the State's wheat yield, will he endeavour to have the 18-year old promise of a railway honoured, before he loses control of the Treasury? 3, Will the railway be started before this Parliament expires?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, I am not able to say at present.

### Water railed and cost.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the approximate quantity of water railed to Katanning and Wagin for railway purposes during the year 1925-26? 2, What was the approximate cost of haulage? 3, Was water supplied to settlers on the Wagin-Newdegate, Narrogin-Corrigin, and Narembeen sections during the same period? 4, If so, what was the approximate quantity?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, (a) To Katanning, 5,000,000 gallons. (b) To Wagin, 5,375,000 gallons. 2, (a) £8,757. (b) £9,604. 3, Yes. 4, Wagin-Newdegate section, 26,000 gallons. Narro-

gin-Corrigin section, 13,000 gallons. Narrogin-Narembeen section, 617,000 gallons.

### Brookton-Dale River Line.

Mr. BROWN asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that funds have been made available by the Federal Government for the construction of the Brookton-Dale River railway? 2, If so, when do the Government intend to proceed with the construction of the line?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, This matter will receive consideration in connection with other railways which have been authorised.

## QUESTION—PETROL TAX.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Premier: 1, What was the total amount of tax collected by the Commissioner of Taxation under the Motor Spirit Vendors Act of 1925 for the quarter ended 31st March, 1926? 2, Is any charge levied by the Government upon the vendors of petrol for the use of these public moneys? 3, If so, what is the nature of the charge?

The PREMIER replied: 1, £23,058 17s. 4d. 2, No. 3, See No. 2.

## QUESTION—WORKERS' COMPENSATION LIABILITY.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that insurance companies accept no liability under the Workers' Compensation Act for medical expenses when injuries occur to workers who have taken the precaution to belong to a fund providing for medical treatment in the event of accident at work? 2, Is he aware that the same companies are charging the maximum premium as if the liability were accepted? 3, In fairness to employers and employees, will he this session take the necessary legislative action to prevent this form of abuse?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, The matter is receiving careful consideration by the Crown Law Department.

## QUESTION—FREMANTLE PRISON.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie): What is the cost of sustenance per head per week for persons incarcerated in the Fremantle prison?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Hon. S. W. Munsie) replied: The cost for sustenance per head per week for prisoners incarcerated in the Fremantle prison is 11s. 1d. This includes all expenditure, except staff costs.

### QUESTION—ROAD BOARDS, RATING.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Works: 1, Did road boards in the south and south-west portion of the State receive a circular similar to the one forwarded to Meekatharra Road Board, dated the 28th April, 1926, instructing them to impose a rate of 2d. in the pound on the unimproved value? 2, If not, to what portion or portions of the State was the distribution of this circular confined?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, By direction of the ex-Minister a circular was sent on the 2nd day of July, 1923, to all boards, other than those in the North-West, who rated at less than 2d. in the £, stating that if they continued to do so it would be taken as an indication that they were able to carry on their business without Government assistance, and that consequently an annual subsidy would not be granted. On occasions since then such boards have been advised that if they continue to rate at less than 2d. the Minister would take that fact into consideration when allotting the subsidy. 2, Answered by No. 1.

### QUESTION—POLICE, MEEKATHARRA CASE.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Justice: 1, On the two counts—Crown v. Leake, of Prairie Downs Station, heard and dismissed at Meekatharra on the 29th March, 1926, what was the total cost, including all expenses such as motor and train hire (if any) for native as well as white witnesses, sustenance for witnesses, court fees, etc.? 2, Upon whose recommendation did Detective-Sergeant Manning prefer the charges against Albert Leake?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, £30 motor hire in effecting arrest, and £33 16s. 1d. paid by Crown Law in fares and sustenance. 2, The matter in the first place was referred to the Aborigines Department, which considered that Albert Leake should be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law. It was then referred to the Crown

Law Department, and the latter officers recommended prosecution under Sections 68 and 187 of the Criminal Code.

### QUESTION—IMMIGRATION.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Lands: How many (a) nominated, and (b) assisted migrants came to Western Australia during the 12 months ended 30th June last?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: (a) Nominated migrants, 1,816; (b) assisted migrants, 1,914. Total, 3,730.

### QUESTION—WIRE NETTING SUPPLIES.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What quantity of rabbit-proof netting was purchased by the State Government for advances to settlers? 2, What was the price paid per mile? 3, Under what conditions is this netting being made available to settlers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, 2,000 miles purchased by the State on the 25th March, 1926, of which 898 miles has been delivered by the manufacturers. 2, £43 14s. 3d. 3, Further moneys were made available by Commonwealth under original scheme which enabled 635 miles to be supplied to settlers on terms of repayment over two years free of interest. Netting at present is being granted on 25 years' terms, in equal half-yearly payments of £4 0s. 7d. per cent. The settler is debited with handling charges, etc. If the new Commonwealth agreement is finalised and ratified by Parliament, it will enable netting to be supplied over 25 years on terms in equal half-yearly payments of £3 10s. per cent. For netting granted at present by the State under mortgage, a clause in the mortgage has been included, enabling such netting to be brought under the proposed agreement when completed. The State Government have notified the Commonwealth Government of their approval of the agreement.

### QUESTION—STATE SAW MILL, MANJIMUP.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Works: 1, What provision has been made to reconstruct No. 1 State mill at Manjimup that was destroyed by fire? 2, Is he aware

that a number of families are still residing on the area, while the wage-earner is compelled to seek work elsewhere, necessitating the keeping of two homes?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, The bush has been classified, plans are being prepared, and reconstruction is anticipated to commence in about three months time. 2, Everything possible was done to find employment for employees affected by the fire. To assist those who could not be re-employed by the department it was arranged that former employees and their families could, if they so desired, continue to occupy mill homes at a very considerably reduced rental for nine months. The usual mill rentals are now being charged, and these rentals are much lower than those operating elsewhere.

#### QUESTION—GROUP SETTLEMENT, CIRCULAR.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is he aware that Circular No. 88 is causing grave dissatisfaction amongst group settlers generally, and the settlers are unanimous that it is impossible to carry on under the present limitations? 2, Will he consent greatly to modify the circular or withdraw it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, A number of protests against Circular No. 88 have been received, but I am not aware that these represent all districts or settlers. 2, Circular No. 88 has been modified.

#### SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.48]: I move—

That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [4.49]: I move an amendment, which I hope the Premier will accept—

That the figures "4.30" be struck out, and "3" inserted in lieu.

Most country members who are in Perth on sitting days practically are engaged in kicking their heels around all day, waiting until the hour of meeting. If the House

assembled at 3 o'clock, Ministers would be afforded an opportunity of doing a little work, if necessary, after lunch and before the meeting of the House. The time I suggest would give them an hour after lunch. At present Ministers carry on at their offices up to 4 o'clock or a quarter past four, and then they come here and have to sit till all hours of the night. If we met at 3 p.m., there should be no reason why the House could not adjourn, subject of course to the expedition of business, by 10 o'clock each night. I do not propose to labour the question. There was a period when the House met at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. E. R. Johnston: At one time we met in the morning.

Hon. G. Taylor: The system failed.

Mr. THOMSON: There are States in which it has not failed, and there is no reason why it should fail here. It has not failed in the Commonwealth Parliament, nor in that of Queensland, which has all day sittings.

The Minister for Lands: Surely you would not follow the Commonwealth practice?

Mr. THOMSON: Why not?

The Minister for Lands: Because the Commonwealth Parliament is an inferior body.

Mr. THOMSON: We are not discussing that phase; what we are discussing is the motion before the House. We ought to be able to do much better than we are doing now. Ministers, though keen advocates of what is termed the 44-hours principle, do not put it into practice with regard to themselves.

Mr. George: They could not.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not sure whether they could or not. My amendment should mean the expediting of business, and certainly the hour which I propose should be better for Ministers. In my opinion we can do business more effectively by beginning an hour and a half earlier. We are now working contrary to nature in that we work at night. In the Railway Department one of the most strenuously debated questions has been what is termed continuous night work. I appeal to members of this House who were formerly members of the railway service to give practical effect to their principles by voting for the amendment.

Mr. Lutey: What about the time for knocking off?

Mr. THOMSON: I commend my suggestion to the Government.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder—on amendment) [4.59]: If the House could be assured that by meeting at an earlier hour we should adjourn at an hour earlier than has been customary in the past, there might be something in the amendment.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Or if we could do more business.

The PREMIER: Yes. Our experience, however, has been that no matter what time the House meets, we generally sit on till the ordinary hour of adjournment. Therefore I think the amendment will only mean prolonging the hours of sitting and perhaps providing ampler opportunities for us all to make speeches. I do not know that the adoption of the amendment would have any other tangible result for those country members who, as the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) has said, spend the sitting days kicking their heels around the city waiting for the House to meet. I do not think those members would, under the proposed alteration, have to spend any less time in the city than they have spent hitherto.

Mr. Thomson: At any rate, they would get more rest at night.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member could assure us that from an earlier meeting hour such a benefit would result—

Mr. Thomson: That matter is in your hands.

The PREMIER: Our experience has been that even by meeting earlier we go on to the usual hour. A former Parliament did experiment with earlier meetings.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Twice.

Hon. G. Taylor: Several times.

The PREMIER: I remember that once the House experimented with meeting at 2.30 p.m. In a few weeks, however, members were glad to revert to the old hour of meeting. If the House assembled at 3 p.m., Ministers would not have the opportunity of doing any work after lunch: the time available would not be worth while. The present hour of meeting, 4.30 p.m., allows Ministers at least one and a half hours in the afternoon, during which they can do a considerable amount of work.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The amendment would relieve Ministers of being overworked.

The PREMIER: They are more likely to be overworked here by extra speeches as the result of earlier meeting. The experience of the House, extending over a long number of years, is that 4.30 p.m. represents the most convenient hour for members to meet.

**MR. E. B. JOHNSTON** (Williams-Narrogin [5.0]: I support the amendment moved by the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson).

Mr. Marshall: Remember that you are the only single member in this House!

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Both the Federal Parliament and the Queensland Parliament meet in the daytime, the Federal Parliament on some days and the Queensland Parliament all the time. I was interested in reading a telegram in the "West Australian" emanating from Queensland. The Government of that State are always held up by Ministers as setting an example of how things are done well. I do not agree with them in most instances, but I do on this question. That telegram indicated that the Queensland Parliament had found day sittings advantageous and were continuing them permanently. I do not agree with the suggestion that Ministers should go to their offices at all after lunch on a day when the House is sitting. We should not expect Ministers to do a morning's hard work and then, after lunch, to return to their offices for another couple of hours' work before coming to Parliament for a further six or seven hours of strenuous labour. That is not a fair proposition and I am sorry that the member for Katanning did not specify 2.15 or 2.30 p.m. as the hour for meeting. If Ministers were to spend the morning in their departmental offices and devote the afternoon to their Parliamentary duties, they would be serving the country well, rather than to come here tired after having spent part of the afternoon dealing with departmental matters. I do not think that deputations should wait upon Ministers except on Mondays and Fridays, and certainly not on days when Parliament is sitting. I am fully aware that there were differences of opinion regarding the success of day sittings when they were held in the past. One member interjected that the country members were not suited by the earlier sittings. On the

contrary, country members would be better suited by whole-day sittings, and the total elimination of night sittings. The earlier sittings were satisfactory from the point of view of country members, but those who were in the Chamber at the time will remember that we had amongst us three King's Counsels and two other lawyers of high standing in their profession. Those were the members who mainly urged objections to the day sittings.

Mr. Marshall: Lawyers are always bothersome people.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Members are remunerated more satisfactorily to-day than ever before.

The Premier: But you must admit that we had small attendances when we sat earlier.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The position held by a member of Parliament is one of honour and dignity and is not one to be attended to after the member has done a day's work elsewhere. If the alteration in sitting hours were made, the State would be better served and members would find it more to their convenience.

The Minister for Lands: Members did not attend satisfactorily when the experiments were tried.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I hope the amendment will be accepted by the House for it will be a step in the direction of day sittings. If it is agreed to, it will relieve Ministers from the burden of doing a full day's work in their offices before attending to their Parliamentary duties.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [5.5]: The work that Ministers have to do to-day is such as they have had to do since we have had the Parliamentary institution in existence, and it is work that will continue in the future. The experiment suggested by the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) has been tried before without the slightest satisfactory results.

The Minister for Lands: It was tried several times.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Ministers have to carry out their work and members have to give consideration to Ministers' proposals. It takes me a full day to go into the various proposals advanced by Ministers at the previous sitting. I should like to have day sittings and if we could meet at 10 o'clock and adjourn at 5 o'clock it would be reasonable. That is not possible, and

present hours are as convenient as any that can be suggested. Of course, if we could get through the work before us between 3 o'clock and, say, 9 p.m., it would be a different matter. I remember the various occasions when the House decided to meet earlier, and I know that those efforts were not attended with any success whatever. In fact, trouble was experienced in getting members to attend.

Mr. Griffiths: They had not got used to the earlier sittings.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At times it was hard to get a quorum. The Leader of the Country Party knows that when measures are introduced to the House, we have to look through them. The first we hear of those proposals is when the Ministers move the second readings. We are expected to deal with those measures on the following day and time is required to look through them. If we met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5 p.m., we would certainly have the evening to look into the various legislative proposals, but under ordinary circumstances the present hours provide the necessary time in the morning and early afternoon to enable us to peruse Bills.

The Minister for Lands: If we met during the earlier hours you mention, we would have to meet after 5 o'clock to recommit Bills, because no one would be here earlier in the day. We have had experience of this business before.

Mr. Thomson: You could get your Bills through.

The Minister for Lands: Country members were absent. I do not refer to the Country Party members.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Every member desires to have day sittings but in the existing circumstances they are not possible. As a country member I have to come to the city, like other country members. If there were no difficulties in the way of the alteration, I would agree with the member for Katanning. As it is, I, as Leader of the Opposition, require all the time I can get to be ready when the House meets. Any hon. member who desires to deal with legislative proposals satisfactorily and properly must have time to consider them.

The Premier: In those circumstances I am sorry I did not support the amendment! If it were agreed to you would not have sufficient time to consider our proposals.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I would have to get somebody else to talk while I gave consideration to Bills. I hope the House will not agree to the amendment. If we are to have an alteration, let us sit at 10 o'clock in the mornings and have day sittings only.

**MR. GEORGE** (Murray-Wellington) [5.9]: I wish to deal with the question from the point of view of Ministers as well as from that of ordinary members. My experience as a Minister showed that very few mornings in the week passed without some member of Parliament wishing to speak to me for half a minute or so. That half minute generally stretched into half an hour or an hour. Frequently Ministers are unable to do much departmental work in the morning. It might be possible to deal with a few letters but as a rule departmental work has to be done after lunch before the Minister goes to the House. Matters may come before him in the morning that require looking into and the information is obtained during the morning. It is then placed before the Minister after lunch and is ready for him to give his decision. In the dim and distant future if the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) lives long enough, he may occupy a Ministerial position and he will then remember what I have said. I realise that members are pressed by their constituents regarding various questions and members desire to get an answer as quickly as possible. They resort to direct action with the Minister. They either worry him on the telephone or call upon him and get him to deal with the matter in his office. The work of the State has to go on, and it is not all done in this House. Ministers have the responsibility of running their departments, and unless they can keep their work pretty well up to date, it gets into arrears and then there are complaints not only from members of Parliament but from their constituents. I remember occasions when we met earlier in the day and I remember, too, that it was with great difficulty that quorums were obtained. Then again, members who made speeches that could be condensed into 10 or 20 minutes, generally stretched them out for an hour or more. Their idea was that if they spoke earlier in the day there would be a better chance of getting a good report in the newspaper than if they waited until later on.

The Premier: No member thinks of that at all!

Mr. GEORGE: I am not averse to any improvement if it can be shown that an improvement can be obtained. In this instance, however, I am satisfied that it would merely lead to the embarrassment of Ministers and their work would be interfered with if the amendment were agreed to.

**HON. G. TAYLOR** (Mt. Margaret) [5.13]: I oppose the amendment. I held strong views regarding morning sittings in the past. The House tried both morning and early afternoon sittings. Both experiments failed and we were glad to revert to the 4.30 p.m. sittings.

Mr. Griffiths: For how long were those experiments tried?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Long enough to show that they were not workable. Hon. members have had experience of the position and therefore I am not prepared to support the amendment. If this were proposed in the nature of an experiment I would support it. We tried it, and it failed. I agree with other members who have mentioned that it was with difficulty that quorums were obtained. If the proposal were agreed to, it would be found that Ministers would not have an opportunity to attend at their offices after 1 o'clock and would not appear there again until next morning. This proposal will not expedite the work of Ministers, nor will it work in the interests of the State or of members themselves, if they cannot get access to Ministers after 1 p.m. on a day when the House is sitting. I hope the member for Katanning will not press his amendment. My experience has been gained over a long period and I am positive that if we started the session in June, we would still have to hurry and scurry, sitting all night during the latter portions of December in order to get through our work by Christmas. And if we were to start in August we should find the same result. I venture to say we should be here just the same, sitting all night as we have done every session since I have been in Parliament. So it is idle to talk about starting early in the day to prevent that; it has not prevented it in the past, and I do not think that, temperamentally, the House is constituted any differently than it was the last time we tried early sittings.

**MR. GRIFFITHS** (Avon) [5.16]: The question resolves itself into a matter of custom. If the sittings were started early and it was found that members were becoming too loquacious, the Premier could very soon put an end to that by giving us one or two all-night sittings. Apparently the early sittings work all right in the Federal House and also in Queensland. A question constantly asked one outside the House is as to why we do not sit in the daytime. It is ridiculous for members to put up arguments about what Ministers can or cannot do in their offices. Apart from sitting days, there are Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

The Premier: But there is all the hon. member's own correspondence to be answered.

**Mr. GRIFFITHS**: Yes, my correspondence keeps you all busy. I write to Ministers rather than bother them personally in their offices. Like the Leader of the Opposition, I favour meeting in the morning and having day sittings instead of night sittings. These night sittings are all very well for members following professional avocations and having this job at £600 per annum as a sideline.

Hon. G. Taylor: But you are always on the farm.

**Mr. GRIFFITHS**: I am always on the job looking after the wants of my constituents. To some of the metropolitan members a seat in Parliament is merely a sideline. On the other hand, some of us devote the whole of our time to our work in this House. I think we should get better work done if we had day sittings. The amendment that we sit at 3 o'clock represents the thin edge of the wedge, for I take it the proposed new practice would soon resolve itself into exclusively day sittings.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed.

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

On motion by the PREMIER, ordered: That on Tuesdays and Thursdays Government business shall take precedence of all motions and orders of the day.

## COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motion by the PREMIER, ordered: That Sessional Committees be appointed as follows:—Library Committee—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Angelo, and Mr. Corboy. Standing

Orders Committee—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. George, Mr. E. B. Johnston, and Mr. Marshall. House Committee—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chesson, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Stubbs, and Mr. Thomson. Printing Committee—Mr. Speaker, Mr. J. MacCallum Smith, and Mr. Pantton.

## BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1) £1,913,500.

### *Standing Orders Suspension.*

**THE PREMIER AND TREASURER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.22]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

### *Message.*

Message from His Excellency received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Luty in the Chair,

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.24] I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty, on account of the services of the year ending 30th June, 1927, a sum not exceeding £1,913,500.

This is the usual Supply brought down at the opening of the session. It is to cover two months only, July and August. It is based upon last year's expenditure, being approximately one-sixth of the total.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is for both loan and revenue.

The PREMIER: Yes, as is usual when asking for Supply. The amounts are, from Consolidated Revenue, £850,000; from General Loan Fund, £750,000; from Government Property Sales Fund, £10,500; from Land Improvement Loan Fund, £3,000; and from Treasurer's Advance, £300,000.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [5.26]: I do not propose to offer any opposition to the passing of the Bill, for it is the usual thing and is based upon

last year's expenditure. But I want a little information from the Premier. This Supply will carry us over August.

The Premier: Up to the end of August.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The year has not started too well. Still, one cannot take very much notice of the monthly results, for interest is charged monthly, and credits are due. The interest bill, apparently, has been increased to cover a considerable amount of loan money. However, we shall get that amongst other particulars when we get the Loan Estimates. It looks something like interest on £5,000,000, a very considerable sum. However, if we get that £350,000 from the Commonwealth, we ought to be all right. Will the Premier tell us whether the money has been paid over?

The Premier: Yes, it was received in monthly payments, the final payment being made at the end of June.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, that is satisfactory, for we can now take that money into this year's accounts.

The Premier: The figures do not show anywhere yet.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, but we have the money. I suppose the Premier has not yet been advised as to whether it is to be an annual payment.

The Premier: I have had some advice. We are to get £300,000 this year, less the amount we were getting under special grant, namely, £85,000. So the net sum this year will be about £215,000.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then our finances this year will be assisted to the extent of £565,000.

The Premier: Yes, £350,000 from last year, and £215,000 for this year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then we shall have a credit balance this year.

The Premier: We ought to be nearly able to do it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is satisfactory to know that we shall have an extra £565,000 to go to the credit of Consolidated Revenue. In view of this, probably we shall wipe out the taxation before we finish the session. Certainly the £565,000 will enable us to square the ledger. I am sorry it is not what the Commission recommended, but it is a fairly considerable sum, and I congratulate the Premier upon it. He can sail along easily for the rest of the year, and sleep well at night.

The Premier: I am burdened with wealth. The trouble is I do not know what to do with it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Has the Premier had much money under the migration agreement? I refer to the 1 per cent. money.

The Minister for Lands: Two millions and a quarter.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This year he has had 1½ millions?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are getting on.

The Minister for Lands: Over a period of two years.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He has had 1½ millions at 1 per cent. this year. I hope we shall be allowed to go on with necessary public works through the use of this 1 per cent. money. I appreciate the fact that we have £565,000 to the credit of our revenue, and 2¼ million pounds at 1 per cent. There is a good deal yet to come.

The Premier: I do not know that there is any more of that particular money.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: My old friend told me we were to get 10 million pounds.

The Minister for Lands: It has not yet been approved of. If they would approve of the 10 million pounds, we would not have any bother over the railways.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I merely rose to congratulate the Premier upon having such a good friend at the head of the Federal Government. They did not do a tap for me.

The Minister for Lands: They gave you £750,000 for migration.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They gave me nothing; but they did lend me a sum of money at 2 per cent. interest. The Premier has had a refund of interest, and that has gone into the past year's accounts. This represents another decided advantage to the Premier. I am sorry I did not take more money, because the refund of interest would have reached a greater amount.

The Minister for Lands: The agreement was not signed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the Minister has had the refund.

The Minister for Lands: Not yet.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have no objection to the granting of Supply.



**MR. THOMSON** (Katanning) [5.35]: I offer no objection to the Bill. We shall have an opportunity later of discussing the Estimates. The Leader of the Opposition has said that the Premier has a good friend in the Leader of the Federal Government.

Hon. G. Taylor: In the Federal Treasurer.

**Mr. THOMSON**: I understood we were to get £450,000 a year. That was the recommendation of the Royal Commission. I hope to receive some information from the Premier as to the financial proposals. We are informed that there is a sum of £350,000 in hand, and that, with last year's amount, we shall get £565,000. The Premier is in a happier financial position than any other Premier I have known of in this State.

The Premier: They would not trust any previous Treasurer.

**Mr. THOMSON**: That position is due to the Federal Government.

The Premier: If I do go out of office, they will stop sending this money.

**Mr. THOMSON**: The Premier might state what money has been handed over by the Federal Treasurer. There has been an exchange between the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, but the country should know what the Federal Government have done in the way of assisting Western Australia financially during the past 12 months.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.37]: I have no wish to withhold any credit that is due to the Federal Government for any grant they have made to the State. I think I have mentioned this in the Press several times during recent months.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was not suggested.

The PREMIER: No, but I am reminded that the Federal Government have been extremely kind to us, and that we have been fortunate in getting this money. The £350,000 that was promised last year represented a grant for that year pending consideration of the question at the financial conference. That money has been paid to the Treasury but has not yet been touched. The Commonwealth propose to make a grant of £300,000 a year for five years. That amount is less the sum we would receive in any case by way of the special grant we

have been getting. We have been drawing a special grant diminishing by £10,000 a year.

**Mr. Stubbs**: It has nothing to do with the money allotted for roads?

The PREMIER: No. The grant for this year, instead of being £300,000, will amount to about £215,000. Next year it will be £10,000 less, and so on. I suppose that for the five years it will average between £170,000 and £180,000. Whilst I am glad to acknowledge that this money has been made available, I would remind members that it does not give us anything like the amount recommended by the Royal Commission. It falls far short of the recompense we should receive according to that Royal Commission.

**Mr. Angelo**: And it was their own Royal Commission.

The PREMIER: There can be no question about our going on our knees in gratitude to the Federal Government for what they have done. They appointed the Commission to inquire into our disabilities, and were obliged to grant us something; but the amount falls far short of what was recommended.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Royal Commission did not take into consideration any previous grant from the Federal Government.

The PREMIER: We were not getting any.

Hon. G. Taylor: They took no notice of the per capita grants, but recommended an annual payment of £450,000.

**Mr. Marshall**: Clear of any other grant?

The PREMIER: Yes, and over a long period of years. They now propose to give us £300,000 for five years, less the amount I have stated, instead of the £450,000 recommended by the Commission for a long period of years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will take the money and accept the risk?

The PREMIER: I will take the money. Members will have read of another £150,000 it is proposed to give us. I think that is contingent upon our accepting their proposals with regard to the North-West.

**Mr. Stubbs**: Have the Federal Parliament agreed to the £300,000 grant for five years?

The PREMIER: I think the Bill is now before the House.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

*Committee of Ways and Means.*

The House having resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

On motion by the PREMIER, resolved—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending the 30th June, 1927, a sum not exceeding £850,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £750,000 from the General Loan Fund, £10,500 from the Government Property Sales Fund, £3,000 from the Land Improvement Sales Fund, and £300,000 from the Public Account for the purpose of temporary advances to be made by the Treasurer.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

*Bill introduced, etc.*

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, passed through all stages, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.**

*Second Day.*

Debate resumed from the 29th July.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [5.50]: I am afraid that within the next few weeks we shall have to listen to a great many speeches on the Address-in-reply. The last session of a Parliament, as members know, is usually devoted to speech making and sometimes a little scalp hunting. I do not propose to do anything of that kind because it sometimes means misrepresentation. What I propose to do is to devote myself, as far as I can, to the position of the State. The last Parliament was not particularly creditable because of misrepresentation, which I think, more or less, helped to defeat the Government then in office. We take a serious view of our responsibilities, and I think we can get through the present Address-in-reply without any serious misrepresentation, and conduct the debate entirely in the interests of the people whom we represent. I cannot congratulate the Government on the Speech. It certainly is not a very creditable production. I wish to apologise to my friend the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) for the unseemly interruptions that took place while he was speaking. I am afraid I was responsible for starting those interruptions, which did not give him a chance to do justice to himself. Neither do I think that the Speech itself gave him much chance,

and therefore the Premier should also apologise to the hon. member. I believe that the hon. member, and Mr. Gray, who moved the adoption of the Address-in-reply in another place, met and discussed the Speech when they were invited to move the Address, and that they were not very jubilant over their task. I can imagine that what they said was this: "By jove, there is not much to talk about; there is hardly a headline that is new; we have heard all these things before." They looked through the Speech and came to the statement that it was extremely gratifying to find that the sinking fund established for the redemption of the goldfields water supply Loan would be more than sufficient for that purpose. The member for Yilgarn has a good memory and will therefore remember the present Leader of the Opposition telling the House four years ago that there would not be any need to contribute anything further towards that sinking fund. So there we have an item that is four years old. Then proceeding a little further, the two hon. members came across the statement that the Water Supply Department have reduced the price of water to the mines. Again they remark: "By jove, that is pretty stale, too." That concession was made in 1922 and the hon. members decided of course that they could not allude to that subject either.

The Minister for Lands: Some people are apt to forget.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And some people are likely to deceive, though I do not say that the present Government would do anything like that. I do say, however, that the Government must be bankrupt of matter when they include in the Governor's Speech items that are so stale. The Speech is supposed to disclose the programme of the works intended to be carried out and the legislation the Government propose to introduce. The two members, reading on, come to the paragraph relating to the opening of 44 schools. The Upper House member remarked "I think we can say we have opened five high schools, too." Then the member for Yilgarn retorted, "No, those five schools were opened years ago; they are merely referred to here in connection with the number of children attending the schools, and so we cannot say anything about them." Then they come to the works to be constructed, and they find no mention of the Yarramony railway promised by the present Premier in 1911, before the elections. They also find that there is no reference to the Dale River railway.

The Premier: Those Bills were brought in by you just before the last election.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I carry out my promises. There is no mention of the railway from Pemberton southwards, but there is a reference to the re-laying of the Jardee-Pemberton line, which my friend put down in 1913. There is no mention of the Point Samson jetty, and in fact nothing at all upon which the two members can congratulate the Government.

The Minister for Works: That must be disappointing to you.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, it is. I do not view the work of this Parliament in the same way as my friend, the dictator who has just interjected. The two members had to say something, and the member for Yilgarn had to confine himself to laudatory remarks of the Premier. We all respect the Premier. The member for Yilgarn found nothing good in the Speech, but found a lot of good in Premier and spoke of him as a true prophet—a man who made no mistakes. It often happens that a true prophet is an impostor. I say at once that the Premier is neither one or the other. It is said that a prophet has no honour in his own country, but we all honour the Premier who certainly is anything but an impostor. The member for Yilgarn was pretty hard pushed when he said that this prophet had estimated correctly, and that he was only out to the extent of £1,000 in his estimate of expenditure of nearly £9,000,000. As a matter of fact there was not one line in the Estimates that was right.

Mr. Corboy: Is there ever?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, but I was going to say that estimates generally are fairly accurate. If the taxation had not amounted to £95,000 more than the estimate, the deficit would have been nearly £200,000. If the railways had earned £300,000 more than was anticipated there would have been a credit balance.

The Minister for Railways: We did not stop the rain from falling.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The rain did not alter the position; the railways lost on both sides of the ledger.

The Minister for Railways: There would have been a lot more revenue had the harvest come up to expectations.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not because you did not earn, but because you spent where you should not have spent. If the business concerns had not returned

£68,000 more than the Premier estimated, I do not know where his estimate would have been.

The Minister for Lands: In fact, if he had got no revenue whatever, we should have had a larger deficit than the one you built up when you were here.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Premier is a little more generous than is the Minister for Lands. The member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) was reduced to calling the Premier a prophet.

Mr. Corboy: I denied that, a minute or so ago. It was one of your own supporters who said that by way of interjection.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: However, the hon. member did say that we had done nothing to reduce the deficit, and that the Premier had done it all.

Mr. Corboy: On the other hand, I gave you every credit for what you have done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, I apologise to the hon. member. I thought he sought to give the impression that my Government had simply created the deficit. However, I am sure he did not mean that, and so I readily accept his explanation. The State has had credit balances only five times since we federated. In 1914-15, with a Labour Government in power, the deficit was £565,000. In the year 1922 the deficit was £732,000.

Mr. Panton: Who is in power then?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I was. I faced a deficit of £732,000, the result largely of the work of the previous Labour Government.

The Premier: And to help you face it, you took the head of that Labour Government into your own Government; you wanted him to help you out of it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When you take over a very big deficit in a time of stagnation and depression as the result of war, it is very difficult to reduce that deficit. I confess that the present Treasurer, when Leader of the Opposition, recognised the difficulties of the position. In 1922-23 we reduced the deficit by £327,000, and in 1923-24 we wiped off another £176,000. In 1924-25 the present Premier wiped off £171,000, and this was increased in 1925-26 by £45,000. That is the position.

The Premier: Not a bad position, either.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, it is not. The House ought to recognise it and not endeavour to show, as the member for Yilgarn did, that the preceding Government had been careless in their financial transac-

tions. I am sorry there is not in the Speech more for one to talk about. Many new proposals that are bound to be introduced here ought to have been included in the Speech. Finance has now been made easy for the Government. Still, this temporary expedient to give us help is not at all satisfactory. Five years is nothing in the life of a country. We had control of the Customs for five years, but the time passed before we could take advantage of it. So I say a limited grant for five years, while very helpful, is not what we have a right to expect. However, for the moment finance will be easy. The Premier will admit that the State was prosperous when he took office, that trade was active and production splendid. Our policy of land development during the previous five years was bearing fruit when the Premier came into office. Year after year we shall be reaping progressively bigger harvests. However, it is a gradual process and slow. The Premier will admit that during his first year the railways, instead of showing a loss of about £540,000, including sinking fund, showed a profit of £60,000. It was the loss on this invested money that caused the deficit. When the railways were losing, the Government, of course, had to find the difference. I had to take £732,000 from loan to cover the deficit in 1922. This year the Premier had to find £99,000 to cover his deficit—a very different thing. During the year just closed the railways showed a substantial loss. I should like to compare 1924-25 with 1925-26. The gross revenue last year was £427,000 more than in 1924-25, and the expenditure was £812,000 more. Taxation increased by £194,000, whilst timber increased by £39,000, giving additional clear revenue amounting to £233,000 under those two headings—a magnificent addition to the Premier's revenue. Whilst he showed for last year a gross revenue of £8,808,000 that is not actually revenue. Our clear revenue is but a very restricted amount. I often wonder whether we should not be wise to show our figures in quite a different fashion. Our business concerns last year earned £181,000 more than in 1923-24. Here is where the Minister for Railways comes in. He spent on business concerns £256,000 more than was spent in 1923-24. It has never happened before, and I do not know why it should have happened last year, that whilst railway revenue was decreased, the expenditure increased. The interest re-couped last year was £329,000 greater than in 1923-24, but in interest and sinking fund

the Premier had to pay an additional £464,000. We had a million and a half of one per cent. money included in this, and the Premier must have held very large sums to his credit over the whole year to have created this additional interest bill. One of the great temptations of any Government is to hold huge sums of money to their credit, and it does look as if the Premier last year held too much to his credit. The deficit was £140,000 less than it was in my last year of office, but as against that the Premier has had a clear revenue of £357,000 more than I had. I suppose the Premier will realise that something better might have been done, considering the enormous increase he has had in clear revenue. However, the Premier is only one Minister, and I am afraid that some of the other Ministers, notably the Minister for Railways and the Minister for Works, have been spending freely. Unless all Ministers back up the Treasurer, the Treasurer cannot succeed in his task. Certainly we have not succeeded during the past two years. Last year we spent £468,000 more than was spent in the previous year. We certainly had an increase of £942,000 in gross revenue as against 1923-24. We certainly had £181,000 from business concerns and we certainly had £357,000 additional clear revenue. But apparently all that clear revenue has gone up the spout and £40,000 increased deficit with it. I think the Minister for Railways and the Minister for Works could help the Premier to explain what really happened. The business concerns, again, show a greater revenue of £68,000, but on the expenditure side an increase of £191,000. Certainly one would expect some increase in the expenditure, but not £191,000. Then I see that sandalwood has given the Premier an additional £50,000 of revenue.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Before coming to the proposal for the abolition of the per capita payments by the Commonwealth to the State, I should like to do justice to the treatment meted out to us by the Federal Government during the past year or two. While we cannot agree with the proposal for the abolition of the per capita payments, it cannot but be acknowledged that the Federal Government have recently given us a considerable amount of help. But temporary expedients, while helpful, are not so very useful. In the experience of a coun-

try, five years is nothing. The Premier wishes to reduce taxation because it is too high. He could do it on a five years' proposal, but it would be very much easier to do it on the basis of 25 years. I consider that under Federation the people in Australia are entitled to live, providing for State and Federal requirements, taxed at the same rate. If, because we are federated and because we have given up our right to almost the whole of indirect taxation, we, the States with smaller populations, are to be taxed at a rate altogether out of proportion to the rate imposed in the bigger States, then the smaller States must suffer and suffer for many years, because the results will be felt in 50 years' time. If people with money to spend on the establishment of factories are compelled to go to States where taxation is low, the fact of their avoiding the less thickly populated States must be a great disadvantage to them. The Federal Government have helped us during the last few years in at least eight different ways. Firstly, they paid the grant of £350,000, which the Premier has received and which will come into this year's revenue. Secondly, there is the grant for this year of £300,000, or it may be £450,000. Thirdly, there was the reduction of the debt due by the State Government to the Federal Government on account of soldier settlement, an amount of £796,000. That amount was written off our debt from the 1st July of last year.

The Minister for Lands: No, from the 1st January of this year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I understood that the rebate was made from the 1st July of last year. Anyhow, for the last six months it represents an advantage to us of £25,000.

The Minister for Lands: We do not get it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, but we do not pay the interest on it.

The Minister for Lands: We do not get the interest.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Interest is charged up to the people who borrow the money.

The Minister for Lands: They do not pay it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course, it is not possible to collect the whole of the interest due to the Government. Under the soldier settlement agreement there

is the 12½ per cent. payment on account of moneys spent by the State in order to cover losses.

The Minister for Lands: That is not true, either.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why?

The Minister for Lands: Because the soldiers will not pay it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They did pay a great deal of it. I shall have to give notice of a question to-morrow to ascertain the amount. I know that they paid hundreds of thousands of pounds.

The Minister for Lands: But not on all of it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, practically all.

The Minister for Lands: "Practically all" is only about 1½ millions.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We have in that fund a considerable sum of money on which we pay no interest. That arrangement was made five or six years ago. Fifthly, there is the migration agreement. The Minister says the amount is 1½ millions, but on that we shall be paying 1 per cent. instead of the ordinary rate of 5 per cent., and there the Treasurer will effect a saving of £60,000 a year. That is a help. Then there will be a refund of interest on the first advance made under the migration agreement, and on which we pay 2 per cent. or under. That will represent a considerable sum. Then we received a special road grant of £48,000. That was an unconditional gift.

Mr. Thomson: Unfortunately, it was all spent on one road.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Oh, no.

Mr. Thomson: Nearly all.

Mr. Marshall: You mean it was all spent on the same road.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At any rate, £48,000 has been spent in this State, and it was an unconditional grant from the Commonwealth. I do not think it was all spent on one road.

Mr. Thomson: About £36,000 of it was.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We do not get much roadway constructed for £36,000 nowadays. To allot it, the Government must start somewhere; they must radiate from some centre. Then we have the per capita payment of £96,000, for the first time in the history of the State, distributed on an area as well as a population basis. That is an advantage.

Mr. Thomson: I think that is the scheme we want applied to Federal finances generally.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That would be a fine thing for the State. Does the Premier agree with it?

Mr. Thomson: I think he does.

The Premier: Yes, if it were put in the Constitution, but I would not trust the Commonwealth authorities for too many years.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is it not fair for the Commonwealth to distribute the money entirely on a population basis. The road grant for this year is £384,000, but I do not know what the position is. From day to day there appear to be changes. One day we are told the agreement has been signed, that the Minister has the department ready and is prepared to go ahead with the expenditure of the money. What the position is at present, I do not know, but it is quite clear to me that if New South Wales does stand out, this taxation cannot be applied to the whole of Australia because it is special taxation for a special purpose. Is our agreement complete? Do we get the £384,000?

The Minister for Works: I wish we knew.

Mr. Marshall: I think the South Australian Government are challenging its legality, and I hope they are proved to be right.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think the Federal Government are challenging the right of the State Government to impose a petrol tax.

Mr. Marshall: Yes, and I hope the South Australian Government win that, too.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Federal Government certainly promised us £20,000,000, and we certainly expect to get it. Distributed on the per capita plus an area basis, it is very favourable to us. This is a record that I think the Prime Minister and his Government can point to with satisfaction. I do not say that justice is being done to us yet, but the list of grants I have quoted must be very helpful to the Premier. It means that his revenue has been strengthened and that his expenditure on public works has been augmented considerably. The Minister for Lands has laid on the Table the new migration agreement. With this I shall deal later. Under it we are to get six millions of money for land settlement, and £4,600,000 for works, all at 1 per cent. Some of this money has been spent, but it is helpful to be able to borrow money at 1 per cent. and a large sum of money, too. Of course, it

cannot be spent except over a period of years, but the people of this State should take comfort from it because, for the first time in our history, except for soldier settlement, we are being helped in the big work of developing this great country of ours.

Mr. Marshall: We are making a rod to be thrashed with later on—a rod for our own backs.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Aaron's rod, the hon. member means. Finance may be easy for the Government now.

Mr. Marshall: The people in this State are taxed by the Federal Government. It is not so generous on the part of the Federal Government to grant such assistance.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course, we pay taxation to the Federal Government, but how much less do we pay per head of population than do the other States? If the Minister for Works, who has been traversing the North, making, probably, very rash but at any rate very liberal promises, were to treat the hon. member's district and the rest of the North-West as liberally as the Federal Government have treated Western Australia under the road grant, and if he were to give to the North a proportion of this amount calculated on an area-cum-population basis, the North would receive a considerable sum. I do not think the Minister for Works, or any other Minister, would treat the North so generously as the Federal Government have treated this State. Dealing with the per capita payments, I am sorry to have to oppose the proposal of the Federal Government, because I believe that Mr. Bruce means well by the State. The abolition of the per capita payments, however, is opposed to the interests of this State, and as it would be wrong to leave the people of the State in any doubt, I propose to show that it would be utterly impossible, and utterly wrong, for Western Australia to agree to the proposal. We have to keep in mind several things. One is that a great many members of the Federal Parliament are unificationists. They want to govern the whole of Australia from Canberra. I venture to say that we can best manage our own affairs.

The Minister for Lands: Hear, hear!

Mr. Marshall: Do not forget that we are encouraging unification. We are accepting everything the Federal Government are offering, road grants, mining grants, and all the rest.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the Federal Government do not wish such grants

to be accepted, they had better not offer them. If the Premier dared to refuse £300,000 or £400,000 here or there, we would soon get another Treasurer. Of course we accept such grants. Unification, however, is in the minds of a great many people. In this Federation we are of more importance than the Federal Government. We have the important things to do. We have the development to carry out. The Federal Government could not come here and so much as drive a peg in the ground without our permission. It was never intended that the Federal Government should do more than a few things. Under the Constitution, their rights to do such things were limited, but were not defined. Therefore, they have added and added to them these big jobs, in order that they might deal with them with a good deal more satisfaction to themselves. I do not know what would have happened if the men who first formed the Federal Government had lived for 20 or 30 years. Probably things would have been different. This ham-stringing of State Governments has been going on from day to day. It is impossible for Australia to develop except by the aid of State Governments. The Federal Government are helping in certain directions, such as with regard to the immigration scheme, land development and works, but that is all they are doing. This territory is ours. They cannot take over the northern part of this State without the consent of the people. It is ours to look after with the help of the people. It is our duty to protect the people, police the country, administer justice, and attend to the wants of our citizens in a thousand different ways. For these services there is no remuneration. The remunerative services belong to the Federal Government. For every letter that passes through this State they are paid. The trade of the State is created by the State Government. The very taxes which the Federal Government collect are due to the activities of the people of the State, and largely due to the policy of its Government. When we remember our responsibility to the people of the country and to Australia in general, we shall see that treatment such as is proposed is not fair either to us or to Australia. The manufacturing centres in Australia must have customers, and these must be found within Australia. No one outside Australia could buy the manufactured goods at Australian prices. We have to remember the disadvantages under which we are suffering. The question of the future and the

development of Australia is almost an international one. I will show how urgent it is that the British territory we have the honour to govern should be developed as soon as possible. I am concerned about the future. After 25 years experience of Federation, and finding it is not satisfactory, that it is hampering rather than helping us, that neither in the spirit nor in the letter is the Constitution obeyed, that none of the things we were told would happen has happened, and that practically all the things we were told would not happen have happened, I do not know why we should continue under Federation unless we get a better arrangement under the Constitution.

Mr. Thomson: Can we get out?

Hon. G. Taylor: We can try.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We should try first to get justice and decent treatment. It is unthinkable that we can be tied to this chariot wheel of the Federal Government for all time, if it is bad for the people of Australia in general, and of Western Australia in particular. I think we can get out. Norway and Sweden were governed jointly more or less in times past, but they managed to separate. There is nothing that we can do that we cannot undo if we go the right way to work. It will be a slow business, and I do not know where we shall find the men with sufficient money and leisure to devote themselves to undoing the Federal knot. I should like to see this country free. If we had remained free we should be in a better position. When I hear reference made to the great development that has occurred in Western Australia because of Federation, and hear the claims of Federal Ministers concerning it, I shudder to think what may happen and dread the thought of the State being further hampered by any more Commonwealth taxation. It is true that because of Federation we had to develop, and create wealth out of which to pay Federal taxes. To that extent Federation has done us some good. All our work has been done under great difficulties. Mr. Deakin foresaw what would happen. Amongst some letters to the London "Morning Post," published in 1902, we find one in particular that ought to be remembered.

The Premier: It was most prophetic.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, Mr. Deakin said—

As the power of the purse in Great Britain established by degrees the authority of the Commons, it will ultimately establish in Australia the authority of the Commonwealth. The

rights of self government of the States have been fondly supposed to be safeguarded by the Constitution. It left them legally free, but financially bound to the chariot wheels of the central Government. Their need will be its opportunity. The less populous will first succumb, those smitten with drought or similar misfortune will follow, and finally even the greatest and most prosperous will, however reluctantly, be brought to heel. Our Constitution may remain unaltered, but a vital change will have taken place in the relations between the States and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth will have acquired a general control over the States, while every extension of political power will be made by its means and go to increase its relative superiority.

The Premier: That is what is taking place.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Mr. Deakin was one of the framers of the Constitution, and one of the greatest men Australia has produced. The Constitution was two years old when this was written. Were we deceived when we were induced by our votes to enter Federation? If we were, we have a right to get out, and it is our duty to endeavour to get out. I do not wish to talk secession now. It is our duty to our children and our children's children, and to Australia and the Empire, that we should have the right to develop our own State and people it in our own way. That is a better way than any way the Commonwealth may suggest. We live here and meet our own people, and know them. Commonwealth members are sheltered. They cannot be approached, for they are 2,000 miles away. I do not know why we should not retain the right to govern ourselves. We voted ourselves into Federation, and must fight our way out of it if we are to get on.

Hon. G. Taylor: And do it before we get too old.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have told members how little the Federal Government enter into our daily lives. We are responsible for such matters as education, police, the administration of justice, health, transport and so forth. I think the Federal Government collect in this State about £3,100,000 in taxation. Of course there is the way to be paid for.

Mr. Marshall: In indirect taxation?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In taxation, direct and indirect.

Mr. Marshall: They take more than that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The State Treasurer had a record last year in the way of taxation, which amounted to £1,400,000. The Federal Government get more than twice

that. Of course, they returned us £550,000 last year.

The Minister for Lands: That includes interest on transferred property.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think not. Let us remember Mr. Deakin's words. The Federal authorities take this money from us. We must make some allowance for the war debt, but must also remember that the responsibility of our Government is firstly to the people of our country, and secondly to its development. We now come to the question of the abolition of per capita payments, including the special grant, as we see from the figures published by the Federal Treasurer. This is accompanied by the surrender of certain taxation. It is very difficult to say how it will affect us in every detail, because so much is proposed to be surrendered. The per capita payment is made to us from Customs and Excise. When we federated it was arranged that we should get three-quarters of the Customs and Excise collected, and as much of the other quarter as remained unexpended by the Federal Government. We got that, but as time went on the Federal Government wanted to do things. They suggested they should pay us through the Customs.

The Premier: They had no direct taxation then. This was their only source of revenue.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. The return of the three-quarters of Customs and Excise was fixed under the Constitution for 10 years. From 1910 onwards it was arranged that they should pay us 25s. per head of the population. Every baby born in the State yesterday would earn for Western Australia 25s. We did not want them to impose a land tax or income tax for our benefit. We could do that ourselves, but we could not impose indirect taxation. The Federal Treasurer said the other day, "It is not right that we should collect taxation for the States to spend." That in theory is good. He concluded by saying, "It is right we should collect indirect taxation for the States to spend, because they cannot collect it themselves. Therefore, we are going to give them £2,000,000 a year for the making of roads, and are going to collect 1½ millions by indirect taxation from Customs and Excise." If we had possessed the right to impose indirect taxation, it would have been wrong for the Federal Treasurer to impose it. This is the amount returned through the Customs. A campaign has been organised by Australian Ministers with the object of making Australia believe that we are getting this amount from



land tax or income tax. That is not so. It comes from Customs revenue. Would the people of this country have agreed to live by direct taxation only? Was any one such a fool 25 years ago as to think that we could collect enough money by direct taxation to carry on the development of this country? We could not collect anything, because we had nothing to tax; there were no incomes and no land values, and not much land owned by private people. Of course we did not agree to live entirely by direct taxation. We did not agree then, and we cannot do it now. We cannot do justice to the country by this means. Our people are already overtaxed, taxed to an extent that amounts to a stifling of industry.

The Premier: Yet if this goes through we shall have increased taxation instead of reduced taxation.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I will show later what it will amount to. If we agreed to live by means of direct taxation, that taxation would be so high that no new industry would be started in Western Australia by any man with a considerable amount of capital. He would be an idiot to do it. Taxation in this State would be nearly four times as much as in Victoria. That is the other point.

Mr. Thomson: The taxation is about on that level now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, but not if we add Federal income tax.

Mr. Thomson: It is 1s. 1d. as against 4s.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is 1s. 2d. plus 4s. 6d., a total of 5s. 8d., to-day in Victoria. That is Commonwealth and State taxation combined. The two taxes would total about 8s. 6d. here to-day. The total would be 6s. more if we agreed to the Commonwealth's present proposals. The position is bad enough now.

The Premier: It would be sheer lunacy for this State to agree to give up the sum proposed to tax its citizens.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. We would be traitors to those coming after us if we did it, and also traitors to Australia. Our manufacturers would not have a market. What does it matter to Victoria or New South Wales whether a farm is made in Western Australia on the one hand or in Victoria or New South Wales on the other? Every year we send £20 to the Eastern States for manufactured goods, £20 per head of population, men, women and children, for goods manufactured in the East: and often confoundedly bad goods too. Under

Federation we agreed to buy the goods of the Eastern States at their manufacturers' own prices. It must make every Western Australian wish to get out of Federation and that as speedily as possible.

The Premier: There would have been no possible chance of Federation had the people not thought that Customs and Excise revenue would be available to the States for all times. Otherwise not one State would have agreed to Federation.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course not. It is the undeveloped States that must suffer. A rich State can live by direct taxation easily. I am sorry to have to weary the House with figures. It seems to be my fate always to have figures to submit to hon. members. The last year for which the full figures are available to me is 1923-24, and I shall take that year for the purposes of comparison. The position has not altered materially since. In 1923-24 Victoria had 1,657,000 people, who paid £1,700,000 in income tax, equal to £1 0s. 6d. per head. The highest Victorian rate on income earned by personal exertion was 7d. in the pound though it is true Victorians paid 1s. 2d. or income derived from property. But one-sixth only of the Victorian income tax in that year was paid on incomes derived from properties. Therefore the average Victorian taxation was pretty low. Nevertheless Victoria raised from it £1 0s. 6d. per head. A little over 9 per cent. of the Victorian population paid income taxation. In 1923-24 Western Australia had 364,000 people, who paid £502,000 by way of income tax, representing £1 7s. 7d. per head of the population, as against Victoria's £1 0s. 6d. Our highest rate in 1923-24 was 4s. 7d.; the tax graduated from that figure downwards. Here 29,000 people paid income tax. Just 9 per cent. of our people paid income tax then. Victoria would need to add 122 per cent. to her low rate of tax, her low maximum rate of tax, on income earned by personal exertion, increasing the rate of 7d. to 1s. 3½d. The rate of 1s. 2d. on income earned from property would have to be increased to 1s. 7d., and that would be the highest tax. Now let us turn to our own position. We should have to add roughly 90 per cent. to our taxation on incomes from personal exertion, and our highest rate of tax would then be 8s. 8½d. Can it for a moment be considered possible for our people to pay such taxation? Of course, the whole of the taxation to be surrendered does not represent income

tax; but whatever the proportion might be, the increase would apply at the same rates. Forty per cent. of the income taxation by the Federal Government surrendered here would represent 40 per cent. at 8s. 8d., as against 40 per cent. in Victoria at 1s. 3½d. and 1s. 7d. I wish to make it clear that this is what would happen if we agreed to the Federal Government's proposals. Victoria is a very rich country. The Victorians have grown rich—and more power to them—by the efforts of people all over Australia. Now the Victorians have the right to put a barrier around Australia and send their goods into all the other Australian States. The Victorians, therefore, will grow richer and richer. The position is very simple to understand. If our Premier lived in Victoria and Victoria wanted from him £50 in taxation, his income there being, say, £1,500, and if the income of a good Western Australian like myself were £500 and Western Australia wanted £50 in taxation from me, while we should both of us have to pay the same amount to the respective taxgatherers, so far as I can work out the figures I should have to pay the £50 out of my £500 while the Premier would pay the £50 out of his £1,500. The tax would be 2s. in the £ in the case of the man living in Western Australia, as against 8d. in the case of the man living in Victoria. I repeat, we are entitled to live as a federated people taxed more or less at the same rate. Now take the case of land tax being surrendered. In 1923-24 the population of Victoria was 4½ times greater than the population of Western Australia. But the land tax collected in Victoria was nearly 13 times as great as the land tax collected here. Estate duties for 1923-24 were low in our case, I will admit; but, taking the figures as they are recorded, I find that estate duties in Victoria were 20 times greater than here, whilst the Victorian population was 4½ times greater than ours. The entertainment tax was about six times greater in Victoria than in Western Australia. Now it is proposed to surrender some of these taxes in their entirety. Hon. members will see how unfair it would be to expect this State to accept the surrender of these comparatively low aggregate amounts from various forms of taxation as against Victoria's acceptance of the surrender of comparatively very large amounts. I notice the Federal Treasurer says that income tax increases at the rate of about 6 per cent. per annum. I should have thought the babies born and the

migrants arriving would be worth more than that increase in income tax to the Federal Treasurer. It follows that arrangements which are absolutely fair to-day would be unfair to-morrow. I have shown that the proposed surrender of taxation by the Federal Government is not the same in respect of all the States. In Victoria the proposed surrender would represent much greater amounts than here. On the other hand, the 25s. per head proposed to be taken from us is even all over Australia. I repeat, if the proposal were fair to-day, it would be unfair to-morrow. After 96 years 9 per cent. of the people pay income tax. But 100 per cent. of the people pay Customs duty. I have shown that income taxation derived by the Western Australian Premier in 1923-24 amounted to about 27s. 7d. per head, as against nearly £7 per head collected in Customs duty from everybody—from the baby born yesterday and from the man who drank his first cup of tea in Western Australia on the wharf yesterday. We have to consider our responsibility to Australia just as much as the Federal Parliament has to consider its responsibility, and we have to consider our responsibility to the people of this State in a way the Federal Parliament is not called upon to do. We have no right to take risks. That is all right from the Federal point of view. I hope we shall deal with this question, and with all Federal questions, on non-party lines. At any rate, I should like to see a committee of members representing all parties of the House accept the responsibility of making recommendations to this House about every Federal proposal of vital importance to the State. The State should not be permitted to suffer in order that parties may gain.

Mr. Thomson: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What does it matter whether parties come or parties go, so long as the country prospers? Therefore it would be well for the whole House to face one way on the present question. There will be many vital questions following this one—vital, I mean, to the people of Western Australia. Since we have been fools enough to federate, it is for us to fight. Federation is an uneven thing. The development of this State is rendered extremely difficult because of the burdens imposed on us through Federation. This Parliament and the Federal Parliament should be co-operating for the welfare of Australia. The Federal Government cannot make Australia. They can make factories by imposing high tariffs, but

they cannot make Australia. They have no influence outside the towns of Australia. They can develop the towns; they can cause the heaping up of bricks and mortar. But they cannot make wheat grow. We have to find the customers for the manufactures, and we have to find the people to be taxed by the Federal Parliament. Therefore this Parliament and the Federal Parliament, I say, should be co-operating. There is no overlord; there cannot be. We are more important than the Federal Government. It was never intended that there should be any overlord. There cannot be any partnership, but there may be co-operation. The duty of the Federal Parliament and our duty is to co-operate.

The Minister for Lands: In the Federal Parliament they do not think the same as we think, though.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No; but let us insist that that is our right; and if we cannot get justice done by the State, let us stand by the State and see what we can do. God knows, I do not want—

The Minister for Lands: We will go down to-morrow and collar the Customs Department!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know about that.

The Premier: As soon as we get the bridge fixed up, we will make them step along! You know the importance of lines of communication.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Bit by bit we have been driven into this corner. Our backs are towards the wall, and we have to see that justice is done to ourselves. If Federal Governments were sincere—I do not refer to the present Government alone but to past Governments as well—about Federation and about co-operation, they would have returned to us the surplus revenue collected during past years. The Federal Government have millions of pounds of surplus revenue tucked away. Last year they put away £2,500,000 of surplus revenue. While we build up deficits, they build up surpluses. Let them face the position fairly and honestly; let them realise the position regarding the development of our great territory of Australia. If they do so, they will admit that Australia cannot be built up by putting bricks together with mortar in the big cities. Rather will they agree that the greatness of Australia must be built up by the primary producers of Western Australia and the other

States. The Federal Government reap the harvest; the State Governments are the gleaners. That is neither good for Australia nor for us as a State. The Federal authorities have taken all the services that pay, and we are left with the services that cannot and are not intended to pay. No one goes to the Federal authorities with requests to provide for charities, for hospitals, for police protection, or for work for the unemployed. Those responsibilities rest with the States; the Federal authorities have the cash.

Mr. Lambert: State politicians go to the Federal arena when they are out of work!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope that some others will go there very soon! I have pointed out the percentage of our people who will be called upon to make good the per capita payment of 25s. per head that may be surrendered. They will have to pay much higher taxation than they are paying now, and I hope the public will realise that not one of the 9 per cent. who will have to make up the surrendered payments will be relieved of one penny of their contributions to the Federal Government.

The Minister for Railways: Each workman who has a wife and two children pays 10s. a week through the Customs.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And every other man in that position has to do so too. It is nonsense for people to be placed in such a position. At the same time, the Government represent high protectionists.

The Minister for Mines: What about your high protectionist friends in the Federal Government? That will not do!

The Premier: The division in the Federal Government on the tariff is not on party lines but on geographical lines. Victoria and New South Wales are high protectionist States because they get the advantage.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And those States have so many representatives in the Federal Parliament.

The Premier: Of course, the Federal Country Party do not believe in a high tariff, but they impose it all the same.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I doubt if we could find half a dozen men in the Federal Parliament who really do oppose protection. A good many talk against it, but they do not vote against it.

The Premier: There are about two only.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have said that no two States impose the same

rates of taxation to-day, and if the abolition of the per capita payment is insisted upon the disadvantages will be greater still. That point should be remembered. I trust that we shall increase our population rapidly by means of immigration and all will pay Customs duty. Then there are the children who will be born.

The Minister for Lands: They are doing very well on the groups just now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Western Australia is asked to pay for the development of the State, for the education of the people, for the provision of hospitals and so forth without getting a penny by way of taxation from the people who are coming in.

The Premier: The trouble is that a great number of the Federal members and Ministers have never been in office as State Ministers. Had they been connected with State Governments, they would have a better appreciation of the position.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They do not see that we have to provide schools and so on. I would like to make clear to the people the section upon whom this burden will fall. Let us face this question fairly. It is not possible to tax a man who buys an article merely in order that he may sell it. The imposition becomes part of his trading costs, just like rent or wages. Therefore it throws upon him very little additional burden; he would not pay anything like 8s. 8d. in the pound out of his own pocket. He would pass on the tax in the selling price of his goods, and so the burden would fall largely upon the sheep farmer and the agriculturist, and the salaried man. The wages man, of course, would be exempt for the most part. These are the people who have to pay, and at present the farmer pays both land and income tax. There is an exemption up to £5,000 respecting the Federal land tax, but our land tax is imposed without any such exemption. Obviously we could not apply the two forms of tax to the land, which means that the taxation will have to be applied to all without exemption. For the farmers there will be no escape; they will have to shoulder the full force of the Federal indirect tax and the full force of the direct taxation as well. This, too, in a country of primary production, not of manufacturing! Obviously the primary producers will have to pay the piper.

The Premier: They get both barrels.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: By God, yes. The Almighty alone knows how the

farmers will shoulder this burden of taxation.

The Minister for Lands: The only way is by means of revolution! Let us get at it as early as possible.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The burden that now must fall upon the 9 per cent. of the taxpayers will be added to year by year. If the price of wheat and wool were to slump, I do not know what would happen.

The Premier: That would upset their calculations as to our incomes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And if that happened, who would suffer most?

The Premier: The State would go to pieces.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course. We must not take the risk.

The Premier: I think we would be entitled to go to any length in resisting it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is very difficult to get the people generally to realise what the true position is respecting this or any other proposal. Furthermore, the trouble is that when such proposals are considered, it is by men sitting in Melbourne who know not Joseph. The proposals are determined there. They may be perfectly sound and reasonable for the people immediately surrounding those who propound them. I can quite understand some people in Victoria and New South Wales appreciating the proposals, because they will suit them. On the other hand, if they are accepted, the people who are really doing the work of making Australia will be crippled. As the Premier said, we are asked to surrender a certain 25s. for a very uncertain 25s. to be collected from people here who depend upon primary production.

Mr. Marshall: It would be a most unpopular form of direct taxation.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is right that people should regard taxation with disfavour, because it is quite possible to tax people out of work, although one cannot tax them into work. It is much worse when the tax is imposed by an authority not faced with the responsibility of providing work for people thrown out of work because of the taxation. In my opinion there are two countries in the world suffering to-day—China and Australia. China is suffering because there is no government at all, and apparently the country cannot be governed. On the other hand, Australia has too much government. Why the devil do we want to set up another king over us? The State Parlia-

ment is enough. With our population we can attend to our development, yet 250,000 people were foolish enough to say they wanted another lord.

The Premier: Yes, and now the lord has set up a whole lot of commissions over us!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: O Lord, yes!

Mr. Clydesdale: Lord help us!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We cannot pay too much for good government, but bad government is dear at any price. The fact is that Federation has set up another authority that is not helpful; it is harmful and retards our progress. Why cannot we recognise that it was to be a limited Federation, with limited responsibilities?

The Minister for Railways: That was the original intention.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Federal Government should reduce their functions to the few it was intended they should control, and they should reduce the collection of revenue to the utmost extent. Naturally the war costs have to be borne by them, but the Federal authorities are indulging in a series of extravagances. When I read the Federal Treasurer's Budget Speech, I wondered what it was all about. Here was fifty millions of money to be spent, and out of it Australia was to have built a few houses for members of Parliament in Canberra! I could not see in the Budget speech one tap that meant work for the people, nor one tap that meant the creation of wealth.

The Premier: The Government spent £2,000,000 on Federal capital buildings last year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If hon. members were to peruse the Budget, they would wonder what part of it could be imagined as being calculated to encourage the development of Australia. They would wonder what portion of it was intended to advance the interests of Australia or prove beneficial to this or any other State. We must not surrender one farthing of their small contribution to us from Customs and Excise.

Mr. Corboy: After all, it is only our work that makes it possible for them to give us so much.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Disabilities Commission was a Commission of hard-headed, fair, capable men. The chairman was experienced in Federal politics, having been a Minister of the Crown, and

another member was from South Australia, and a third member was an ex-chief of the Customs of Australia, a man hard as flint. They were not from this State. They were sent to us by the Federal Government, and they found that, for the good of Australia, we should have the right to control our own Customs for 25 years, and that, until we secured that control, we should have a grant of £450,000 per annum. Now we want it. The Federal Government were advised by that Commission that we had been unfairly treated. Our case was established, and our duty to posterity is to see that our wrongs are righted. I have said that any question of State rights should not be a party question. I hope we shall be able to keep these great questions, that will live long after Governments are forgotten, well away from party politics. To arrive at the results of the Federal tariff, let us compare the State Implement Works with our State butter and bacon factories. The State Implement Works have to take advantage of every penny of Customs protection. Even so, the works can barely pay their way. Had we not written off a very considerable sum, those works would have been unable to show a profit at all. Yet, as the result of protection, some farm implements that previously cost £100 cost to-day £175, representing a measure of 75 per cent. of protection. The farmers suffer from that, while the advantage to the State is not very much, being not more than the employment of a few men at Fremantle instead of in the East.

Mr. Sleeman: The farmers do not support the works very much.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why don't you?

Mr. Sleeman: I attempt to do so?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then you are doing your duty for the first time in your life. Now take butter and bacon factories. They are not protected, but have to compete with the old-established factories in the Eastern States. It is not fair competition. I remember when the merchants said they would not sell Western Australian butter in Perth. The Government said they would have to; and to make the way clear they advanced thousands of pounds in order that the imported butter might be held until the local butter was sold. The Western Australian butter and bacon factories suffer the whole disadvantage of the tariff without getting any protection at all. The Northam factory turned out 200 sides of bacon per week, worth £500. This

£500 was produced within the State and so was £500 saved to Western Australia, as against money spent for bacon imported from the Eastern States. The money served to pay wages and taxes and railway freight, and to increase trade. It was circulated in the district and so provided employment. It was money taken from the soil. The farmer has to live under the tariff without benefiting by it at all. Even the plough that ploughs the field in order to feed the pigs that go to the bacon factory, has to pay Customs duty. Every penny produced by the factory had to be wrested in keen competition with the factories of the Eastern States. We cannot continue to buy food from the Eastern States when we have land that will grow it. For many years we have been sending out of the State £2,700,000 annually for food that we should grow ourselves, thus paying taxes to the Governments of the other States and providing capital and work for the people of those States. The Northam butter and bacon factory did more to provide work and create wealth within the State than the State Implement Works have done. Mining also has suffered greatly by the tariff. Nothing we have been able to do has helped the industry over the stile. We have reduced the price of water to the industry and have exempted the industry from certain taxation borne by other sections of the community. Why did we have to do all this for the mining industry? Because the tariff has helped to kill it.

Mr. Marshall: Yet the protectionist argues that protection makes home markets!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We have rendered this help, not for the shareholders, but in order that we may provide work and create wealth. However, it has proved of little use, for the tariff discounts all that we may do, and up to date we have not been able to put our gold mining industry on its feet. Our importation of food, which persists largely because there is a tariff, could be produced within the State. It is equal to more than the value of all the gold produced in the State or the timber we export; yet our food production is sadly retarded by the wretched tariff. In all the efforts we make to produce stuff for export we are seriously hampered by the tariff. So, it is important that in all these big questions we should stand together in order that our country may be developed. I wish to point out that, during the last century the population of the world has more than doubled, and that during

the last 10 years the increase in world population has been 174,000,000 people, being four times the population of Britain, and more than all the population of North America. Yet, during the last 15 years, the world's wheat yield has increased only to the extent of 7,000,000 bushels. This, then, is our chance. We wonder why wheat is dearer. It is because of the wonderful increase in world population.

The Premier: Yes, it is not that America has ceased to be a wheat exporting country.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Our chance has come, for the world's unoccupied land does not provide for the expansion rendered necessary by this amazing increase in population. Outside the frigid North, Australia possesses the only unpeopled land in world. So, whether we like it or not, we shall have people coming into Australia, particularly into Western Australia, in search of food. The problem will be to provide food for the people. Just imagine it! The world's wheat crop has increased by 7,000,000 bushels in 15 years, whereas in 10 years the world's population has increased by 174,000,000 people. Never again shall we be able to satisfy the demand for land in this State, not even if we have at work all the surveyors we can possibly get. My advice is to get them as soon as we can and keep them at work. The world has awakened to the fact that its increased population must inevitably mean greater demands for cultivable land. So the primary producer can look for a very much better market than he has known in the past. I am pleased to know that the Minister for Lands sold more land last year than in the previous year, and is selling a good deal of light land, which can be used with wheat at 5s. a bushel, whereas it was useless when wheat was 3s. 6d. a bushel. We have millions of acres that will be used now, when the world's market is so much firmer, and when we know that the demand will continue. It is a great thing to know that the Eastern States are now turning towards the West and viewing our lands with favour. By the way, the world's cattle are fewer than before; the world's sheep are fewer than before, and after all the world's stock is the only reserve of food. We should give an opportunity to men of our own race first of all as we are doing in this State. We must have cheap money, and we must have a good deal more freedom than we enjoy if we are to make

this country what it ought to be. I do not intend to say much about group settlement. This is a great co-operative scheme with the people of the State on the one hand and the farmer on the other hand, the one finding the money and the other doing the work. All land settlement in this State has been co-operative work, because the settlers have not had money. The people who settled the wheat belt did not have money. The South-West people have not money. Group settlement resolves itself into a question of management. We have in the wheat belt a wonderful set of men because, when we settled it, Australia was depressed and men came here from all quarters. From our goldfields we got a wonderful selection of men. In the South-West we have from the Old Country a splendid lot of men who are doing good work. Many of these things really ought to be discussed on the Estimates which, I hope, will be brought down fairly soon. A word or two now about mining. I regret that the gold yield is gradually but surely declining, and I agree that we ought to do everything possible to stay the drift and, if possible, pick up some of the leeway. It is difficult to know just what to do, but it seems to me that the Federal Government stand to lose taxation particularly. We have invested millions of money in railways, water supplies, public buildings and other requisites for the goldfields and we, too, stand to lose a lot. If the State Government and the Federal Government could come together and consider how much they are likely to lose if the gold mining industry comes to an end, and if they could meet those engaged in the industry and come to some sort of an arrangement to enable the industry to continue for five or ten years, or even longer if possible, some good might result. We have to do something. It is of no use delaying or talking about the question. We stand to lose a great deal if the mines close down. We have done all we can to assist the industry by reducing water costs and exempting mines from taxation. It is idle to deplore the past in respect of disabled miners. Let us face our responsibilities. We were foolish in failing to collect something from the gold that was produced, but we did not do it and all Governments of the past are to blame for that. Gold stealing seems to be one of the serious handicaps, but I do not propose to deal with that question to-night. It is not a fitting time to touch upon that aspect of

the question. The Government have offered to help to supply the mines with cheaper power. That is something, but we have to do enough to enable the mines to make their low-grade ore pay. The railways and water supplies will suffer unless something is done fairly soon. I know it is hard to decide just what should be done. I am not blaming the present Government on the score that something has not been done, but it is necessary for them to act as quickly as possible. I am not so pleased with Ministers regarding the North-West Department. That department was established by my Government, but the expenditure was voted by Parliament and without a word of protest from members now on the Government side, and yet the Government during the recess and without discussing the question with any member of the late Government determined to abolish the department. When it is a question of abolishing a department established by a previous Government, those responsible might well ask why the department was established, especially when the House had confirmed the act. Yet the Government have wiped out this department without word or thought. We established the North-West department to benefit the State and particularly the North, and to provide a better connection between the Government and that part of the State. Surely it is wrong not to have continuity. We should endeavour to have continuity of Government. Yet to-day we have the North-West Department, and to-morrow it is wiped out because of a change of Government. Why is not the North entitled to have its department?

The Minister for Justice: You only established the department by way of experiment. You did not know what the effect of it would be.

Mr. Thomson: It was an honest attempt at decentralisation.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course we knew; of course it was successful: of course it was right to keep it going and of course it was wrong for the Government, without saying anything, to abolish the blessed thing when Parliament was not sitting. There was no justification at all for that.

Mr. Lamond: The electors up there do not agree with you.

Mr. Marshall: They have been crying for its abolition for years. They laughed at the fallacy in the first place and in fact at the whole of the ramifications of the department.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They did not; I know as many people in the North as does the hon. member.

Mr. Marshall: No, you can't.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A member who represents Meekatharra can hardly speak for the North-West, because that town is connected with Perth by train. I should think the people of the North would resent it. They appreciated the establishment of a department to which they could go and which was sympathetic with their requirements. The Government had no right to abolish the department without consulting Parliament. Now a proposal has been submitted by the Federal Government through the Press to take over the North. The Minister for Works has been touring the North and I think he has told the people that they alone should have the right to decide whether the North is to be handed over to the Federal Government.

The Minister for Works: I did not say that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did not think that the Minister had said it, but I think I read it in the paper.

The Minister for Works: No.

The Premier: To be consulted, but not alone.

Mr. Marshall: You must have read something that was not in the paper.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Anyway, the Minister led them to think that they had the right to decide.

The Premier: That did not appear in the Press here.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, it did.

The Minister for Works: That was never published.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister for Works told me he had not seen the newspapers for five weeks, and so he does not know what was published.

The Minister for Works: I have seen all those reports.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I say it was suggested.

Mr. Sleeman: That must have been in the "Leader."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The offer by the Federal Government to take over the North leads me to remind members that the Federal territory has been run at a loss of £400,000, towards which Western Australia pays £25,000. If the Federal Government take over the North and run it, it will be done at the cost of the people of Australia,

and we shall have to help to foot the bill. Why, I should like to know, do the Federal authorities make these proposals through the Press instead of submitting them through the Government to this Parliament? Whatever is best for the North and for Australia should be done, but it can be done as well or a bit better by the State Government than by the Federal Government. The Northern Territory is represented in the Federal Parliament by one man who has no vote. Our North is represented in the State Assembly by four members and in another place by three members, who have both voice and vote. I should think they would hesitate to hand themselves over to the control of the Federal Government.

Mr. Marshall: One has already committed himself.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We have to consider what is the best to be done. We are offered by the Federal Government £2,700,000, the cost of our public works in the North, the offer being made through the Press, of course. If we take the land north of the 26th parallel, we find it represents about one-half of the State. I think that land would probably be worth anywhere from 1s. to 2s. per acre. Probably we would get £30,000,000 if we offered the land to the squatters who now occupy it under leasehold. We would then still have the right to tax it at the rate imposed upon land down here. If that land were sold to a syndicate in London, we would get a tremendous sum for it. It is worth £30,000,000. Then take the great pearling industry, the riches of fish life and the fact that the North-West is auriferous from end to end. It produces gold, tin, lead, copper and in fact every metal and mineral known. If we have regard also to the fact that it is possible coal will be found there, I do not see why this territory should be handed over to the Federal Government, particularly as such a procedure would not be an atom of advantage to any single individual in the North. Probably it would be a disadvantage. Why then disadvantage the people of the North simply to let the Federal Government take it over? We are not rich enough at present to develop the North, but all the Governments of Australia are not rich enough to develop the coastal plain of Australia. I will be years before that is done. The best that can be done for the North is being done to-day. If some day it can be a separate State, well and good. If the people of the North once fall into the



clutches of the Federal Government, they will never get a separate State. They will be governed from Canberra instead of having their own members to represent them in this Parliament. Therefore there is something more in the question than the mere valuing of the North in pounds, shillings and pence, and before I would consent to any change, I should want to know how the people of the North will be benefited and in what way the future of the North will be made brighter. Otherwise I should not be prepared to let the North go to people who at present cannot manage what they have. It is a great and wonderful territory and some day it will maintain a great population. I am sure that the people of the North can approach the Government here, while on the other hand the State Government can hardly approach the Federal Government, so what chance would the people of the North have if they had to deal with the Federal Government? The question of employment is all-important. There are far too many men out of work to-day, and yet our expenditure has been the heaviest probably of any year we have known. Arbitration is the law of the land. If arbitration could only fix wages and conditions that would suit the men—and not too many conditions, either—we would have a better chance of keeping men in work. There is nothing so sad as to see a man looking for work, and to see the waste of wealth as a result of unemployment. When money ceases to flow through the pockets of the working man trade becomes stagnant, though I do not suggest that the working man gets very much more than is sufficient for him to live on.

Mr. Sleeman: They do not get enough.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No one gets enough, but the unemployed are not getting anything. I do not know whether this is the fault of our Arbitration laws. Everything should be fair as between the employer and employees. Work in this country should be plentiful. I know that work comes from the wise expenditure of money. We can spend a great deal of money, and still have serious unemployment unless it is spent in the right direction. We must have works going on if we are to avoid unemployment. We should unite in an endeavour to make the truth known. It is easy to say that men do not get enough to live on, that the hours are too long, or that they should have better houses and conditions; and it is easy to say

that employers are not good employers. Men are not helped by this lip service. They are only helped when the truth can be spoken to them. All should join in the work of finding employment for all who need it. I know that unemployment comes through bad employers, and that these are a menace to the community. I know that bad union leaders are a menace to the workers.

Mr. Sleeman: They are few and far between.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There are bad employers and bad workmen. The "go slow" policy creates unemployment.

Mr. Sleeman: You never see them go slow.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know that bad results will accrue from the unwise expenditure of money. High wages do not necessarily produce work. It is the work that men do that creates employment. A man to whom £10 is paid, and who earns £9, is not doing much for the country. He is not encouraging employment or making more work for others.

Mr. Sleeman: What about the man who is getting £4 and earning £5?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He is the man. The work that is done creates work, and the accruing wealth creates more work. The man who earns £5 and receives £4 is performing a national service.

Mr. Sleeman: And the man is working his heart out and starving at the same time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member's remark will not help any of the workers, nor will his attitude of mind help them. It will not assist the unemployed to tell them that when they do work they work too hard. In the aggregate the work done by the people of this State is wonderful, but there are men who do not work properly. It is the efficient use of machinery and money, and the creation of proper work that leads to employment. Work only creates work when it leads to good results. It is no use fooling with the subject. Every man who is in employment is in danger, because others are competing for his job. It does not help the trouble to put up wages. One man who is out of work helps to put another out of work. Money is only distributed in small quantities. It is the money that goes out in wages that creates employment for other people. I wish we could settle these questions once and for all. No one wants a man to work harder than he does, but we want him to be happy, comfortable and contented. The remarks of the hon. member will not help him one jot.

Mr. Sleeman: And we want men to get a fair wage while they are working.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There never could be a wage that the hon. member would not call unfair. He will never say that the result of the work of a man is unfair.

Mr. Marshall: There is no occasion to say that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is easy to profess great concern for the working man, and to show it in this way. We ought to come to some reasonable arrangement as between the employers and the employed. Those who have set themselves up as employers are responsible for their workers. There is the employing section and the working section of the community. The employing section is entitled to see that everyone in the community is at work. This cannot come about if we are going to have all this pinpricking and nonsense. I have seen cases in the Arbitration Court which cause one to wonder what they are all about. Sometimes it is an interpretation of a Government case, or, as to whether a glass should be picked up in the right hand or in the left hand. That does not help anyone.

Mr. Sleeman: We know where all the pin pricks come from.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I could well understand the sweater being locked up, but I cannot understand the reason for making trouble with the employers over every tinpot thing. Very often trouble occurs with Government employees.

Mr. Sleeman: Very often there are pinpricks in Government departments.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They are largely manufactured. Fortunately there are only two cardinal sins. These troubles are manufactured as between the employer and the employee for the sake of making trouble. The time has come when fair dealing is all that should be needed. The management of the affairs of the workmen should be in the hands of their appointed leaders. We must have unions where big bodies of men are employed. I do not say that the union leaders are always to blame. Both sides have to be reasonable, and meet together. Both sides must agree that it is a good thing to employ and a good thing to work. We could then have a better result. I understand from the Premier that 200 unemployed men will be at work in a few days. We should not have a man out of work in this country. I deplore the fact that the Gov-

ernment have ignored the laws of the land. I do not intend to deal with the insurance scheme of the Minister for Works, but will leave that to the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy). I must, however, protest against this practice of the Minister, of giving preference to unionists. There is no law against preference to unionists. The Government have twice tried to get the House to agree that the court should give preference to unionists. I am told that in some places preference is given to members of one union and not to those of another. I am told it is necessary for a man to join the A.W.U. in places such as Geraldton or Kalgoorlie. A man may have been a member of the carpenters' union for 30 years, but if he wants a job he has to sign up with the A.W.U.

The Premier: Where has that occurred at Kalgoorlie?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I will get the case for the Premier. If that is so it is wrong. Preference should be given to no one, whether he be a unionist or not. A man is wise if he joins a union, but he should be free. He should not be compelled to join. The Government have no right, with the funds of the State in their keeping, to ignore their responsibilities to all the people. I pay taxes. I do not want the tax I pay to be used in giving preference to any one set of individuals. All are entitled to live. No one should be compelled to pay 25s. in order to get a job. The question of the compulsory contribution by unionists to a fund for political purposes, has been discussed before. Men should be free to pay or not as they please. The Government have said men are not to have work unless they become unionists. That is wrong. They have no right to say to Mr. Tom Butler "Here is the job; where are your men." What has that to do with him? Everyone has a right to register at the Labour Bureau whether he has a ticket or not.

The Minister for Lands: There are scores of these men at the Peel Estate.

The Premier: There is no preference to the A.W.U.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am told there is preference to unionists. A man is compelled to pay 25s. for his ticket, and some of this money is used for political purposes. The Minister for Works has imposed the condition that a man must have a unionist

ticket before he has the right to live by his work. I object to that. The Minister says the men will be given time to pay for their ticket. I hope that is the case. If the Government are going to insist upon this kind of preference they should give the men time in which to pay for their ticket. I most emphatically protest against this sort of thing, though I have nothing to say against the wisdom of a man joining a union if he desires. The workers must have some organisation.

Mr. Sleeman: What are you complaining about?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The preference to unionists.

Mr. Sleeman: You think they should not come in?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They should come in voluntarily. It is an abuse of the power of the Government to put the funds of the people to this use.

The Minister for Lands: Some of those who grumble most do not want work.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Government have no right to adopt that attitude. What right have they to determine whether a man should belong to this, that or the other union, particularly as the funds of the party are strengthened by these contributions?

The Minister for Lands: I know of some men who have never filled a job for 20 years.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They are clever people.

The Premier: All the genuine men are unionists.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know several who are not, and who would not join under any consideration. What right have the Government to say that a man shall not live by his work in the Government service unless he joins a union? He is a taxpayer, too, and finds revenue. Someone has to find the money that the Government spend. It is a rotten thing that a man—

The Minister for Works: Who finds the money for carrying on arbitration?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That brings in another point. I can quite understand the unions wanting the men to pay something towards the cost of conducting their cases, but I cannot understand the man who does not want to pay for a Labour paper being compelled by the Government to buy it.

The Minister for Works: The money a man puts in for his union is the best investment he makes in his life.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Some of the men do not say so.

Mr. Marshall: Have you convinced yourself that you are right? No one else is convinced.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I must apologise for the want of understanding on the hon. member's part. I consider that the 44-hour week introduced by the Government has increased costs considerably and has reduced employment without being greatly appreciated by the men. In the interests of the country, it would be much better to give the cash for the additional hours. Certainly the 44-hour week must reduce work. There will be an opportunity on the Estimates to discuss many things which otherwise I should like to refer to now. The migration agreement has been signed, and that is satisfactory. The best I could do in my agreement was to get assistance for five years at the rate of two-thirds interest. That represented a very considerable advantage. Mr. Bruce, however, has managed to induce the British Government to give still better terms, and under the new agreement we get virtually twice as much—ten years' assistance instead of five. I am delighted to know that the agreement which I was able to make, and for which I am responsible, has led up to this better agreement. I hope it may lead to a still better one. I am indeed pleased that the agreement has been liberalised, and I hope this State will proceed actively with the work of development. I regret that there is to be no redistribution of seats. I am sure the Premier regrets it, too, because he said years ago in this House that the time was over-ripe for a readjustment of boundaries.

The Premier: There are different points of view.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. The Premier is the head now; he was the tail then.

The Premier: I was the head of the tail then.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not right that the country should be represented as it is at present. The Canning electorate has some 14,000 electors, while Menzies has 374.

The Minister for Works: How many has Roebourne?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have not the figures for Roebourne just now, but I have no desire to avoid giving them to hon. members, if they really want to know.

Mr. Marshall: I think Roebourne has 284.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not concerned about the number of voters in any particular electorate. I believe there are 600 or 700 in Roebourne; but have hon. members opposite no sense of decency, no sense of justice to the people of this country? Why should the present state of affairs be allowed to continue? It is indecent that the representation should be on the present basis with the present boundaries.

The Minister for Mines: Why did you withdraw your Bill?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister for Mines knows why my Bill was defeated.

The Minister for Mines: Why?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Partly because the Minister voted against it, because he howled against it all over the country.

The Minister for Mines: My vote did not matter; you had a majority.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did not have a majority. I had not a set of followers who were afraid of caucus. I was not in the fortunate position of having on my side of the House 27 members of whom 13 were ready to obey the other 14. My party was composed of free men. I had no chance of compelling anyone to sit on my side or vote with me. The Premier, if he liked, could put through a redistribution of seats Bill tomorrow.

The Minister for Works: It was a question with your followers of saving their own skins.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: With the present Government it is a question of saving their own skins that they do not put up a redistribution of seats Bill. Does the Minister for Works mean to tell me that his Government would not put up a Bill if that were not the case? Of course it is a question of members opposite saving their own skins.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What is the Premier going to do about the matter? I shall move about it myself in the House if he does not. I am prepared to test the feeling of members on the subject. We owe something to the people of this country, and should provide them with proper divisions and proper adjustment of electoral

boundaries. I tried to do it, but could not get the Bill passed. No boundaries fixed by anybody will suit everybody, but there is no reason why boundaries which suit scarcely any member of this House should suit the people of the country. It is a scandalous thing that redistribution of seats is not mentioned in the Governor's Speech. However, we shall see what we can bring forward if the Government will not act.

Mr. Lambert: You did not resign when your Bill was defeated by your own members. You could have resigned.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and the hon. member can resign his seat in this Parliament now. Of course I could have resigned.

Mr. Marshall: You soon got out of office, so it did not matter much.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is a dreadful thing for this country that such a man as the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) is sent here at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are bad shoppers, very bad shoppers, and accept anything. When the Estimates come along I shall have an opportunity of discussing questions of finance. I fear I have already occupied the time of the House too long, though Federal questions have taken up a good deal of my speech. I consider it is the duty of all members to go into the present Federal question without any display of party feeling. It is not a question of the present Government or the present Opposition or Mr. Bruce. Let us do justice by the country, and let us come together as regards these proposals. If they be good, let us accept them; if they are bad, as I say they are, let us join to oppose them. The Federal Government are not doing us justice. We are entitled to a great deal more than we are getting. Of course, we do not want anything we are not entitled to. We have got something, at any rate. But our future is endangered because of the power of the Federal Government, and largely because of the Federal financial proposals. In many instances infirmity of purpose has been disclosed by the State Government, and this has led to a good deal of trouble. I hope the Government will rise superior to all their difficulties, and that all our people will get back to work again, and that we shall achieve wealth and prosperity. Everyone should fight for a better and brighter and happier life for all our people, no matter where they live; but we ought to be per-

fectly clear and frank and honest about it all. I reiterate once again that we ought to join in the fight against the Federal authorities where their proposals are against the interests of Western Australia. We must fight for the right to live as a sovereign people. We are the more important Government of the two, with more important things to do. When we federated it was intended that this should be so, that we should be the important partner and have the greater responsibility. There was a time, before we federated, when we were in the enjoyment of responsible government, when we really governed ourselves. How different was the old time in this land from this time under Federation! All of us remember to-day that once we had responsible government and knew only one other Government, namely the British Government. I am reminded of those days, and I wish they were back with us. Then we could say with Kipling—and I think his words most appropriate—

Daughter am I in my mother's house, but  
mistress in my own;  
The gates are mine to open, the gates are  
mine to close.

On motion by Mr. Thomson debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 4th August, 1926.*

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £1,913,500.

*First Reading.*

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Third Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan, [4.40]: Before addressing myself to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I desire to express to Mr. Ewing my personal thanks for the references he was kind enough to make regarding newly re-elected members. I join with him in extending a welcome to those members amongst us who have come here for the first time. Coming as they do to fresh fields of labour, I feel sure that they will render the same signal service in the assistance they will give to the work of this House that they rendered in the past in different spheres. In common, I know, with feelings that will be expressed by all other hon. members, I naturally regret the non-reappearance of those members who were formerly occupants of seats here. New members will appreciate the fact that such an expression of feeling conveys no reflection upon them in any sense. It is merely the expression of natural feelings one entertains when parted from friends formerly members of the Legislative Council. The motion under discussion is couched in terms which many members will think deserving of their ready acquiescence and adoption. There may be others, however, who may consider subjects are dealt with in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor that deserve some criticism. It may even suggest to them the necessity for some amendment. Various questions, of which notice has already been given, would rather presuppose the fact that there is room for criticism relating to various subjects dealt with in His Excellency's Speech. I concur in the desire that has been expressed for celerity in disposing of the Address-in-reply debate, but it must be recognised, by no one more than by you, Mr. President, that this is the only occasion when hon. members have an opportunity to ventilate various subjects during the course of the one debate. As a rule, members do not lose the opportunity that presents itself at this period of the session. The Speech is replete with many subjects, with some of which we are already familiar, but it will be conceded that the Speech indicates clearly a desire on the part of the Government to assist the prosperity of the State. Though saying that of the pres-