

introduced, there would be an end at all events to these heavy carts carrying heavy loads upon the road between the City and Port, which costs hundreds of pounds to keep in repair, and which would otherwise last for years, if it were not for the extraordinarily heavy loads going upon it. I think something should be done, and further facilities be given to the public at a cheaper cost than can be done by these carts. Some hon. members say they are very useful. So they are, but I am firmly of opinion that if the railway system were fairly worked there would be no necessity for these carts. I am afraid I have dealt with this matter at too great a length and have been tiresome. It is difficult when one starts with a great question to break fresh ground. I daresay I have said a great deal you have heard before. I only hope that our deliberations will result in its being one of those sessions which will contribute to the future success of this colony.

MR. JAMES: I beg to move the debate be adjourned until to-morrow.

Motion put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.12 p.m. until 4 p.m. next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 2nd July, 1895.

*Importation of Fruit into ports north of Champion Bay—Post and Telegraph accommodation at Bamboo Creek—Operations in connection with Midland Railway Loan Act, 1893—Irrregularity in despatch of Mails for Geraldton—Address-in-Reply: Adjourned debate—Adjournment.*

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4 p.m.  
PRAYERS.

#### IMPORTATION OF FRUIT NORTH OF CHAMPION BAY.

MR. KEEP, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier, whether it was the intention of the Government to amend the existing regulations regulating the importation of apples, pears, quinces, &c., into ports north of Champion Bay.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that no representations had recently been made to the Government on the subject. It was not advisable, so far as the Government was informed, to alter the Regulations.

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH ACCOMMODATION AT BAMBOO CREEK.

MR. KEEP, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier,—

1. If he were aware that the business of the Post and Telegraph Department at Bamboo Creek was at present being transacted and carried on in the back room of an Hotel.

2. Was it proposed to erect a Post and Telegraph Office and Quarters at Bamboo Creek, at an early date.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied, as follows:—

1. Yes; there is no other place available.
2. Yes; as soon as possible.

#### MIDLAND RAILWAY LOAN ACT, 1893.

MR. LEFROY, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier,—

1. What amount of land had been sold by the Midland Railway Company since the passing of "The Midland Railway Loan Act, 1893," and what sum had been received by the Government on account of same.

2. What amount arising from rents had been lodged with the Government.

3. What amount had been paid by the Government out of the Consolidated Fund, under the guarantee, as interest on bonds issued under "The Midland Railway Loan Act."

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied, as follows:—

1. Presuming the question refers to the 2,400,000 acres held as security by the Government—None.

2. £2,868 6s. 10d.

3. £7,624 12s. 1d.

#### IRREGULARITY IN DESPATCH OF MAILS TO GERALDTON.

MR. LEFROY, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier, why the mails for Geraldton and the stations *en route* were not delivered in time for despatch by the Midland Railway train on Saturday morning last, and whether steps would be taken to prevent a recurrence of such an irregularity.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied, as follows:—

By a regrettable error as to the time.

Both the Railway Department and the Post Office officials have been instructed in such a way as will avoid any recurrence of this irregularity.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY TO GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

##### ADJOURNED DEBATE.

On the order of the day for the resumption of the debate upon the Address-in-Reply,

The SPEAKER said: According to our Rules, the member upon whose motion a debate has been adjourned is entitled to pre-audience, but inasmuch as the hon. member for East Perth (who had moved the adjournment) is not in his place, it is open for any other member now to resume the debate upon the Address-in-Reply.

MR. SOLOMON: Sir, it is not my intention to say much on this occasion, but, as the hon. member who moved the adjournment is not here to continue the debate, I will take the opportunity of saying a few words. It is no doubt satisfactory to the people of the colony to hear that the finances are in such a sound condition, though a great deal of that is discounted, I think, when we consider the amount of direct taxation which the people have to bear. I find from the latest published returns that the revenue per head of the mean population amounted to over £11,

and that out of that £11 no less than £5 5s. per head was paid through the Customs, for every man, woman, and child in the colony. I think this shows that our taxation through the Customs is very heavy, and it is satisfactory to hear that the Government propose to repeal the duties upon some of the necessities of life. I think the colony has reason to congratulate itself upon the satisfactory terms upon which its last Loan was floated. For the first time in the history of the colony we have been able to float a Loan upon such advantageous terms. With the large amount of capital that seems to be available for investment in the English market, I think it is quite probable that even better terms may yet be obtained. It is possible that before long the colony may be able to float a Loan at 3 per cent., and, if so, I think it would be an excellent opportunity for the conversion of all our Loans, at a lower rate of interest. In this way a great saving might be made to the colony. At the rate our last Loan was floated (3½ per cent.), probably that saving would not be adequate to justify the conversion, but, if the opportunity occurs and we can get our money at 3 per cent., I think it would be a good thing if we took advantage of the opportunity for converting our loans. With regard to Federation, although many of us may be in favour of Federation in the abstract, yet, looking at the flourishing condition of our revenue and of our finances generally, and the prosperous condition of the colony as compared with the condition of the other colonies, I do not think it would be a wise thing for this colony, for some time to come at any rate, to join in the Federation movement. Before we agree to federate I should like to see the other colonies in as prosperous a position as this colony is. I also think that serious difficulties might arise with reference to the amount of representation we would be entitled to on the basis of population. If we federated I think it should be on the understanding that our position in that respect should be on a par with that of the other colonies, and that our voting power upon any national question that may arise shall be equal to theirs, otherwise, in a few years hence, possibly this colony would find itself a mere province or dependency of the federated colonies. I do not think the people of the colony would agree to accept that position, or any position of inferiority as compared with the sister colonies. The day for that has

passed by. It is satisfactory to learn that the numerous public works authorised by Parliament are progressing satisfactorily, and that that very important work, the railway between Southern Cross and Coolgardie, has been let at such a satisfactory price. While on the question of railways, I think with many other members that the time has come when there should be a reduction of fares and an increase of speed, particularly on the line between Perth and Fremantle. I do not think any loss would accrue to the Government from a lowering of the present rates, and the present tariff generally, both for passengers and goods. The probability is that the revenue would be increased. I know many people who have occasion to travel by railway now complain, and they do bar themselves from making more frequent journeys because of the high fares charged. The journey between Perth and Fremantle only occupies from half to three-quarters of an hour, yet the fare for that short distance is 2s. 6d. first class, and 1s. 6d. second class. I think those rates might very well be reduced, and made 2s. for first class, and 1s. for second class; if it were done I do not believe the department would lose a penny by it, because I am sure there would be a great deal more travelling done. With regard to the question of the development of the Collie coalfield, I am of the same opinion as I was last session. I think we should give every facility for opening up these coal deposits, if it is proved that the coal is a marketable coal, and that there is a large extent of it. I think it would be an excellent thing for the colony to have these coal mines worked. The people that would settle in the neighborhood of these works would be an industrial class, and permanent residents, and these mines may yet become large centres of population. Our goldfields are progressing satisfactorily, from all accounts. In fact, had it not been for her goldfields, Western Australia at the present moment, would have been in a very different position from that which she now enjoys; and I think all the expenditure we have incurred in connection with our goldfields will be recouped in time, as there seems to be little doubt now that the progress and prosperity of the fields are assured. The Government, I think, have done a very wise thing in purchasing the W.A. Timber Co's. concession and plant. I know it has been an eyesore to a great many people, this concession. In fact it has generally been looked upon as one of the

blunders of our early Government. The Agricultural Bank will no doubt prove a useful institution, if only liberal concessions are made to borrowers. At the same time I do not think the conditions upon which people can obtain advances from this Bank are calculated to operate in favour of some classes of settlers. If a man is in a position to spend £400, or £500, or £800, on his land before he can borrow an amount that is likely to be of use to him, I do not think that class of man is likely to trouble the Agricultural Bank, unless he can get his money at a very low rate of interest—at such a low rate that it would be greatly to his advantage to borrow the money. The new lighthouses at Rottnest and Cape Leeuwin will no doubt prove very useful. It has often been a wonder to me that some serious accident has not occurred before this to vessels coming round the Leeuwin, owing to the want of a lighthouse at that dangerous point, and I feel sure that this new light will prove of great benefit to shipping. The opening up of stock routes to our Northern districts is also a step in the right direction, but I should have liked to have heard some intimation from the Government, now that they are providing greater facilities for bringing stock into market, that they intend to repeal the Stock Tax. The Harbour Works at Fremantle are undoubtedly progressing favorably. The recent severe gales have proved that the work is of strong construction and of a lasting character. I hope that when these works are finished they will prove of great benefit to the colony, and that they will realise all our expectations. If they do not, it will be a sad thing for the colony, after all the money they have cost. The dredging work that is going on at Princess Royal harbour is also a good work, and I hope the Government will allow the dredge to remain there until the work it is engaged on is completed. I think it might then be sent to Fremantle. At the same time, I am not one of those who want everything for Fremantle. I am quite content to see the dredge employed where it is likely to be of benefit to the colony. I am perfectly willing that every district should have its fair share of expenditure. We are told in the Speech that the Midland Railway is at last practically completed. That too, is good news. I hope the whole thing is now finished with, and that the line is in good working order. Among the Bills promised is the Municipal Government Bill, which, I presume is

the Bill that was brought in last session, but which did not become law, owing to a technicality. I hope the Bill will be carried this session, because it is really necessary that some measure of the kind should come into operation, to meet the growing requirements of our municipalities. I hope the Bill includes proper provisions for dealing with the sanitation of our towns, and with other necessary improvements and reforms. I notice that although our revenue is increasing there is also a tendency to increase the public expenditure by increasing the permanent staff of the public service. While on this subject, I have heard with some regret that, at Fremantle, the Customs Department have been importing, or intend importing, two tide-waiters from another colony, at a salary of £250 per annum. I hope this is not true. If it is, it is a great slur upon those who have been in the service here for so many years. I know of one instance where a tide-waiter who has been in the service for something like 23 years, is only receiving a salary of £220 or £230, yet we hear of outsiders being appointed at higher salaries. If those who have been in the service for so many years are unfit for the work or are not to be trusted in higher positions, I think the sooner they are shifted out of the service the better. But, if they are fitted for the work, I think those who have been long in the service ought to get the benefit of promotion, when an opportunity occurs. I think it is very discouraging to those men to find themselves passed over in favour of strangers. It appears to me that in a department like the Customs, every officer from the highest to the lowest should have the entire confidence of the head of the department, because there is no knowing what may come before any officer in the way of goods being landed surreptitiously or smuggled, and he has always to be on the alert. Therefore I think every officer of the Customs who is employed upon such work, should have the full confidence of his superior officer, and be entitled to promotion when a vacancy occurs. The Export Duties Repeal Bill has already been passed, and I think it was a step in the right direction. The proposed abolition of the Ecclesiastical Grant is a measure upon which the Government may be congratulated. I hope, however, with other members that in commutating this grant, the greatest liberality will be shown towards the Churches concerned. The next subject I come to is the proposed removal of the Railway

Workshops. No doubt it will be thought that because I represent a part of Fremantle, the removal of these shops is one of those things which of necessity I am bound to oppose, rightly or wrongly. That these workshops are at present in a place where they ought not to be, there can be no doubt; but I feel sure that if members would only take the trouble, before this question comes up for discussion, to look for themselves at other sites than the Midland Junction, suitable for these works, they would come to the conclusion that there is no necessity to remove them to Guildford, but that a very suitable site can be obtained close to Fremantle. No doubt the Engineer-in-Chief, who recommends their removal, is an expert so far as railway or marine engineering is concerned, but I ask members to consider this: have not other experts been wrong? Some years ago we had to pay a large sum for the professional opinion of Sir John Coode, on two occasions, in connection, with harbour improvements, and what has been the result? In the present Engineer-in-Chief we have now a gentleman who is entirely opposed to the opinion expressed by Sir John Coode. It may be found that, if other authorities were consulted, we should have the same divergence of opinion as to the necessity for removing these workshops to the Midland Junction. I am afraid if they are removed to that site it will be a sorrowful day for the colony. While on this subject, I may mention, with reference to Mr. Allison Smith's plans, I believe his plans were taken from the plans of the Newport workshops, which I understood cost from £100,000 to £150,000, and they stand on something like eight or ten acres of ground. From what I am told—I have not the plans before me—I understand that the plans drawn up by Mr. Allison Smith contemplate the taking up of something like 80 acres. If the works at Newport, which only cover a few acres, cost from £100,000 to £150,000, I am afraid we shall find these shops, as designed by Mr. Allison Smith for the Midland Junction, a millstone round the neck of the colony. It is not my intention to say more on this subject at present, because it will come before us again. I will only appeal to members in this way: I hope they will exercise their own judgment in this matter, and look upon it as a question of national importance, as I look upon it. I do not regard it as a local question, though of course I do think that vested interests is an important element to be considered in dealing

with it. I think you will find that wherever this question of the removal of Railway Workshops from one part to another has cropped up vested interests have always formed an important factor in determining the question. In conclusion I can echo what has already been said, and the congratulations uttered, as to the prosperity of the colony. I only trust that the work before us, and our actions during the session, will prove of benefit to the country and contribute to its welfare and advancement.

MR. JAMES: Mr. Speaker—I owe a double apology to this House—an apology which I tender the more readily because I do not forget the many former occasions upon which I have asked for and received the indulgence of the House. I first of all apologise for not having been in my place this afternoon for the purpose of resuming this debate, but I was absent simply through a misunderstanding as to the hour of the House meeting, being under the impression that it was half-past 4, as on other afternoons. I also owe an apology to the House for having moved the adjournment of this debate at such an early hour last evening; but I was under the impression that, after listening for three hours to a good deal of iteration and reiteration upon the Address-in-Reply—repetitions which I suppose we shall continue to hear until the debate is disposed of—I was under the impression that after three hours of discussion on the Address last evening, members would have been glad to have got to some other work, and, as there were several matters on the notice paper to engage our attention, I thought we might go on with some of them, for the rest of the evening. I was not aware at the time that this could not be done, until the Address-in-Reply had been disposed of. I am not one of those who agree with the hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. Marmion) when he suggested that a good deal of time is wasted in connection with these discussions upon the Address-in-Reply. I think it is an occasion when all of us should express our opinion with regard to the various matters that have arisen during the course of the past year, since this House was in session before, or matters which suggest themselves as likely to arise during the course of the session we are just entering upon. I do not believe it is in the interests of this country that we should always come here and say we have the best of all possible Governments, and that nothing can be said against them. That is a frame of mind which I am

afraid many members of this House, who were also members of it under the old Constitution, have grown up in. They forget the fact that by changing from that old form of Government to a new form of Government we have taken upon our shoulders different and enlarged responsibilities, — responsibilities which demand the fullest enquiry and the fullest discussion. We have taken upon our shoulders a form of Government, the very essence of which is full and free discussion, and full and free criticism of the actions of those who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs. If those who sat on these seats — (Opposition seats as they are called) — under the old form of Constitution had regarded their position as we do now, — that is, the position of men who are called upon to oppose, or perhaps I should say to criticise, the actions of a Government which is very strong and somewhat despotic — if they had stuck to their guns in those days as stoutly as we have stuck to our guns, the probability is that we should have had a much better Government under the old system than possibly we shall have under this system. I take it that we are not here for the specific purpose of getting into power ourselves, or of turning the present Government out of power. I rejoice to think, Sir, that we have not reached that state of party Government in this colony, and I sincerely trust we never shall reach it. As I have often said before, I say it again, I most sincerely hope we shall never have party Government in this House, for it is a system which has been utterly discredited. I am afraid that we in these days do not pay that respect to the genius of those who originally founded party Government when we attempt to carry out, under entirely different conditions, the system of Government which they created and which was well adopted to attain the object in view, under different conditions. The best respect we could pay the founders of that system of Government is by doing now what they, if they had lived in our days, would have done, when they found themselves surrounded by the same conditions and face to face with the problems we have now to face. If Party Government has taught us one thing more emphatically than another it is this: that parties are not divided by principles; they are not divided by measures, they are divided simply by their aims; those who seek office themselves, are anxious to get into office and those who

are already in office, are anxious to keep there. That is what party Government has come to, in these days, in every part of the world, and I regret, indeed, to find that our worthy Premier seems to be unable to free himself from this old fetish, and that he cannot recognise that, although we have adopted Ministerial Government, there is no reason why Ministers should not represent this House as a whole, and not any particular section of the House. Coming to the Speech itself, it is not a very satisfying Speech. I expressed my regret when I first had the opportunity of addressing this House that the present Government seemed to be satisfied with a loan policy and a works policy. I expressed my regret, and I desire to repeat my regret, that they do not seize the opportunity, when everything is favorable for the purpose, of carrying out social reforms, when they have such magnificent opportunities of carrying measures which hereafter will probably be fraught with immense difficulties. Instead of that, they seem to be satisfied, having passed their great loan policy, to rest upon their oars. The honorable member for Fremantle seemed to seek some justification for the Government not coming forward with another loan policy. May I assure the honorable member that, to those who sit on this side of the House, and to those who have the truest and best interests of the colony at heart, the most satisfying feature in the whole of this Speech is to find that the Government have not brought forward another loan policy. Let it not for a moment be thought, that we think the only policy which this colony requires is, the policy which the honorable member for Fremantle would have us believe—a policy which consists in the borrowing and spending of money.

THE HON. W. E. MARMION: I never suggested anything of the sort.

MR. JAMES: I understood the honorable member—I may have been wrong, but I understood him to offer a sort of apology because the Government had not been able to bring forward another loan policy. We on this side of the House at any rate never asked them to do so. But it seemed to me that the honorable member himself was of opinion that the only policy that would be acceptable to this House was a loan policy.

MR. MARMION: I never said that either.

MR. JAMES: The object we have in view is to urge upon the Government—and we do so

as strongly as we possibly can urge them—to avail themselves of their opportunity for now dealing with social measures which, in the course of things, must sooner or later be dealt with, so that we may have them settled, when everything is favorable for carrying out such legislation—when the finances are flourishing, and the colony is prospering, and the people (as the Premier assures us) are happy and contented. I cannot too often repeat, and members cannot too deeply realise the fact, that never again in the history of the colony probably shall we have a Government with such magnificent opportunities as the present Government for carrying out measures of a social and domestic character. I would remind them that they will be judged hereafter, not as some lenient members on the Ministerial side of the House are inclined to judge them—by the amount of money they spend, but by the splendid opportunities they have had, and the manner in which they have seized and taken advantage of those opportunities. If you judge them by that standard, which is a high standard indeed, what will be the verdict? Every member must realise what that verdict will be. Here we have a Government that possesses the confidence of the country, opposed by an Opposition who are not anxious to take office, nor seeking office, and who are never guilty of any factious opposition to the Government, an Opposition several members of which often vote with the Government,—I say we have in this colony more than in any other colony I know of possessing what is called Responsible Government, a Government which has the most magnificent opportunities for carrying out measures of social importance, and measures which we in this colony, as they have had in all the other colonies, must sooner or later face. The Premier who really has the whole power, and who is the man we look to as a West Australian to set us a good example, and to see that we do not fall into bad habits—he is the man we also look to to use the great power he has and the grand opportunities he has to settle these vexed questions that will have to be settled. It is for this reason that I regret to find no indication whatever in this Speech of any intention on the part of the Government to deal with such questions. We have no matters brought forward at all that are debatable. The Speech consists only of two or three items of importance, and these not of first class importance. The rest of the Speech, is

merely a record of what has been done, and not what we want—a record of what is going to be done. Now is the time, with a strong Government in power, and with the favorable opportunities offering—now is the time to deal with those questions which always necessarily excite a good deal of opposition, and which require a great deal of strength to successfully carry them through. We have no right to expect that the present favorable time will continue, and that these magnificent opportunities will present themselves on some future occasion. Why, then, should we put off dealing with these questions? I do not like to see this procrastination. I like to see a Government recognizing and seizing their opportunities, and recognizing the responsibilities they have on their shoulders by virtue of those opportunities, and dealing with these difficulties and I candidly admit, somewhat contentious questions. In the Speech itself there are one or two matters to which I wish to refer shortly. They may be considered unimportant matters probably, but we cannot help that. Our grievance is, not so much that it contains unimportant matters, but that it does not contain those important matters we should have liked to see it contain. I have already expressed my opinion as to the Collie coalfield, and I desire to stand by and maintain that opinion. I think we should be acting rashly indeed in spending a lot of money upon a coalfield that is not yet properly developed. I hope the Government, before this question comes on, will lay before us some reliable opinions, showing whether the Government are or are not justified in constructing a railway to this coalfield. I should like to have the opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief on that point. I don't want the opinion of engine drivers. When we have some reliable opinion on this point, we shall be in a better position to deal with it. The question is not so much whether we have the coal there, and in sufficient quantity, but whether sufficient developments have taken place to justify the construction of this railway at the present time. At all events the line I take up, and which many other members take up, is a safe and cautious policy. We ask you to show us, on the best authority in the colony, namely the Engineer-in-Chief, whether we are justified or not in undertaking these works. In asking that, we are not asking anything unreasonable. There is another point: this Collie coalfield was discovered by accident, apparently, and I

should like to know what good reason there is, if any, why this should be the only place in the colony where you can find coal. May we not assume that coal may be found in some more convenient and more advantageous situation. What do we know about the quality of this Collie coal? The Government took down some experts, in the shape of members of this House who perhaps had never seen coal except when travelling on board a steamer, and these wise and experienced gentlemen when they saw this coal at the Collie were satisfied with it; and, because we have the opinion of these experts to go by, we are asked to vote for the construction of this railway. Coal is a matter of which I know as much about as most of the members who went on that trip, and that is absolutely nothing. It is essentially one of those matters in regard to which we ought to have the opinion of men who are qualified to express an opinion. We all most fervently wish that the coal is there, and that it is good marketable coal, but we want something that will carry conviction to our minds. Another question that will crop up in connection with this Collie coalfield railway is as to the proper route to be adopted. I hope that is a question that will be dealt with purely on financial grounds, and that members will not support one route because it may suit the port of Bunbury, or another route because it may suit the people of the Vasse. In a question of this kind: what we have to consider is, not the interests of Bunbury or the interests of the Vasse, but the interests of the whole colony. Then again there is the question of working this coalfield. Even if I were satisfied as to the quality of the coal, and that it could be supplied at a price that will enable it to compete with the present abnormally low price of Newcastle coal, I should never consent to the construction of this railway, unless it is constructed by those who are going to work the mines. If the Government themselves are going to work the mines—and there is nothing startling in that proposition, nothing more startling than that they should possess and work railways; we know the Government do not possess or work railways in England, but that is no reason why the Government should not do so here, and there is nothing more startling in their working these coal mines—I say if this line is to be constructed by the Government, let the Government work the mines. Why should we build a railway for the convenience of

other people? I want to ask the Government, I want to ask Sir John Forrest, if he has the courage of his opinion, or any backbone, why should we hand over to capitalists, why should we hand over to syndicates—and I have heard him express very strong views about syndicates—an estate that is worth £640,000,000, in addition to the fire clay? I understood, Sir, when we had a report on this coalfield and discussed the question last session, that the value set upon these coal deposits was the modest sum of £640,000,000, and I want to ask, in the name of good Government, and in the name of common sense, why should we construct a railway for the purpose of making this enormous wealth available, and then hand over all this wealth to be enjoyed by private individuals? If this enormous wealth be there—I am not satisfied myself that it is—but if it is there, why should not the Government get the benefit of it themselves? It does seem to me it would be foolish, and, having regard to the enormous amount of wealth involved, almost criminally foolish, to build a railway at the country's expense and hand over to other people the enormous wealth which that railway is designed to open up. Coming to another question, it is difficult to know how to deal with the question of a Mint. I think, as was said by the hon. member for Nannine, the proposal shows what an unbounded and whole-hearted faith Sir John Forrest has in this country. So far as that goes, I rejoice to see it. But dealing with the proposal itself on its own merits it seems to me a piece of childish vanity. There are other gold producing countries besides Western Australia which do not possess Mints of their own. I have heard of a place called South Africa and its goldfields. Those goldfields have had no need of a Mint to advertise them, by having sovereigns made with "South Africa" stamped on them. I believe Queensland is also known as a colony in which gold is to be found, but Queensland has not found it necessary to advertise itself by having a Mint of its own and making its own sovereigns. Surely to goodness we are not going to embark in this expensive enterprise for the mere glorification of seeing "Western Australia" stamped on our coin, or for the sake of advertising our goldfields. Other countries do not find it necessary to do so. It seems to me that those who are advocating the establishment of a Mint, simply do so because they feel like a spoilt child who wants

a toy. It is no matter whether it is a tin toy; he wants a toy and a toy he will have. It is the same with the Premier and this Mint. Unless we have some stronger arguments in support of the establishment of a Mint than those that have been yet adduced, I shall have a very poor respect indeed for the members who are influenced by such childish arguments. Sir, a matter in which I shall be glad to support the Government will be in the steps they propose to take for improving the sanitation of Perth. I rejoice to think that the Government can learn something by experience. Only last session when this same question was brought forward we had a speech on the subject from that eminent engineer and eminent humourist who sits at the end of the Treasury bench (Mr. Burt), and, if I remember rightly, the hon. gentleman then told us it was all rubbish—that the Government had nothing to do with the matter. On that occasion the Ministerial "Mark Twain" pooch-pooched the idea and laughed it to scorn. Now I rejoice to think that even the Attorney-General is sometimes open to argument. None of us who live in Perth at any rate can fail to recognise, for even the Government have recognised, the absolute need of taking this work in hand. There is another matter I should like to refer to. It is not mentioned in the Speech, but it was referred to by the hon. member who moved the Address-in-Reply. I refer to the question of the deferred payment of rents by selectors. The hon. member seemed to criticise the action of the Government adversely because they refused to remit or defer the payment of rents. I take this opportunity of thanking the Government most heartily for the position they did take up in regard to this question, and I hope they will stand by, and not budge from that position. I know of nothing more dangerous in the parliamentary history of Australia than this question of tampering with selectors' rents.

MR. A. FORREST: Starve them out!

MR. JAMES: I hope that whilst we have a contract, whether it is made with the Government or with private individuals, we shall insist upon that contract being carried out. When we framed our Land Regulations, there is no man living who will say they were not framed on the most possible liberal scale. When we have provided, as we have in these regulations, for almost every contingency, why should we, because a man happens to get one



bad season, remit or defer the payment of his rents? While these rents remain as part of the regulations, the Government should insist upon their payment by those who owe them.

AN HON. MEMBER: They have no money.

MR. A. FORREST: The hon. member for East Perth would sell them up.

MR. JAMES: What I say is this: if these rents, taking good seasons and bad, are too high, reduce them. If, because the selector meets with a bad season, he is to have his rent remitted, or payment deferred, where are you going to end? If this kind of argument is to prevail, the best thing we can do is to abolish the regulations altogether, and give away the land free. But here is a contract, and, so long as the contract exists, it should be enforced. We have seen the result of remission of rents in the other colonies. The principle is fraught with the greatest danger to good Government in this or any other colony. It has cropped up elsewhere, and apparently it is going to crop up here. I say if the rents are too high, reduce them; but, so long as they stand, the Government should insist upon their being paid.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: How will you carry it out?

MR. JAMES: I hope the Government if they make laws will enforce them. Surely they can be carried out. I should regret to think that the Government make laws and have not the courage to enforce them. If so, the sooner they make way for somebody who will enforce them the better. A very important matter mentioned in the Governor's Speech is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure dealing with death duties. I fully approve of the proposal. It has been asked for more than once, and it is time we had such a measure. Of course as we are not yet in possession of the Bill, we cannot discuss its details. It is sufficient to say now that I am glad indeed that they have recognised the justice of the principle, which underlies these death duties. Now we come to that part of the Speech dealing with what some members look upon as a sop to the working man—a free breakfast table (as it is called.) It certainly did amuse me to hear the hon. member for Fremantle, who is always so good and generous, speaking as he did on behalf of the working man. I am glad to have the opportunity of personally thanking him for his solicitude for the working man; but I want to tell him, and I want to tell the Government, that if they repeal the duties

mentioned in this Speech, as a sop to the working man, it is a huge mistake. I must candidly say that the Speech itself does not make that suggestion—it does not say we are going to have a free breakfast table; but I suppose that those hon. members who moved and seconded the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, and who made that suggestion, may give those details in debate which the Government cannot conveniently put into the Speech itself. We had, if possible, an almost extra stream of laudation coming from the hon. member for Fremantle, speaking professedly on behalf of the working men. Now do not let us talk rubbish. The Customs Duties Repeal Bill, brought in by the Government, is now on the table, and hon. members will see, if they look at its provisions, that of the reductions in taxation proposed in the Bill the greatest number will be of benefit to those who are not working men. I am not aware that working men have much to do with such imported articles as wire netting, or wire fencing, or wool packs, nor that such articles are used on breakfast tables. As a fact, more than three-fourths of the items that appear in this Customs Repeal Bill, which is put forward as a special sop to the working men, as being especially for their benefit, will not benefit working men at all. I should say those who will benefit most from these reductions in taxation, even on the items of sugar and tea, will not be the working men at all, and the greatest part of the benefit of cheap sugar itself will go to the brewers and the confectioners, and not be directly felt by the consumers at all. Again, what is the object of telling us that we are to have a free breakfast table, when almost in the same breath the Government have stated that they are not going to abolish the Stock Tax? What will be the good of abolishing the duty on sugar or the duty on tea, while you retain the duty on stock? I am well aware, and cannot help being aware, because it has been so constantly said by some members of this House, that the Stock Tax is not supposed to increase the price of meat to consumers. Well, I am prepared to accept that; and, assuming it to be true, why should this tax which does not effect the price of stock, but which does act as a very strong irritant among the people of this colony, be retained? Being, as I am, a whole-hearted protectionist, I recognise that the squatters, who are the great producers of stock, have some right to protection. But I

say that even protection may run mad—that you can have too much protection—and when you have to pay so exorbitantly for meat as the people of this colony have to pay now, what is the Stock Tax but protection run mad? Surely the natural protection should be sufficient, without a Tax. We have had the tax for some few years now, and yet we find the importation of stock, instead of decreasing, is increasing. That shows what has been the effect of the tax and that will be the effect of it whilst immigration is so enormous. The Stock Tax was put on, I believe, simply to suit a few people who are largely interested in buying and selling. It is said the Stock Tax encourages the squatters; but I contend that the best way to help and encourage the squatters, who deserve every help, is to give them better facilities for shipping stock from Northern ports, and I would go further, and say they should be assisted by the Government subsidising a line of steamers to enable them to ship stock to the Southern centres of population, cheaply and regularly. If you do that, you will be doing infinitely more to assist the squatters than by maintaining the Stock Tax; and although this subsidy may cost far more, we are prepared to pay for it, and we should at least get rid in that way, of a tax which is a cause of very great irritation, even if meat retained its price. It is said that those who grow stock for the market get only 3d. or 4d. a pound for it, while we know that those who eat it, have to pay 9d. or 10d. a pound. We cannot question that this is so, but we do ask and want to know how so large a difference arises; and say there is no member of this House who does not sell cattle, who can possibly understand the cause of that large difference. The reduction in taxation to be effected by this Bill is so comparatively small that I would much rather see these small reductions not made at present, but corresponding benefits be given in other ways; that is to say, I would prefer that the money which will be lost to the revenue by these reductions should be spent in a manner which would do much more good to the working men, and to the community, than providing this so-called free breakfast table. There is one matter I should particular like to see the Government take in hand now, and that is, that in all the Government contracts and employment there should be recognised and enforced an eight hours' working day. That is done in the sister colonies, and I know

of no more favorable opportunity than the present for adopting the principle, which I think hon. members will recognise is a just, though some think an impracticable, one. Speaking, if I may claim the honor of doing so, on behalf of working men—and I hope my past actions as a member of this House, entitle me to speak as such—I believe that working men, although the great majority of them would not benefit so directly by the adoption of the Eight Hours' Day in the Government works, as they would by the reduction in the taxation on tea and sugar, would rather go on paying the extra amount they have to pay now, and have the eight hours' principle recognised and enforced. There is another important matter upon which I should like to see the Government take action—and I believe that in both these matters the Premier's sympathies are with us, if he would only make an effort to bring them forward—and that is the adoption of what is called a minimum wage in Government employment and contracts. This may appear to some hon. members as rank blasphemy.

**THE PREMIER:** It would suit the lawyers, I should think.

**MR. JAMES:** It certainly would do so, as what the lawyers have now is not a minimum, but a restriction as to the maximum rate of pay. I have noticed that when a good old conservative theory comes before this House, some members welcome it or defend it, because it is what the people have in England, therefore it must be perfectly good. The hon. member for West Kimberley often likes to talk in that way. The principle I now advocate is nothing new or startling. It has been recognised in England, and been put into practice in works undertaken by the County Councils, which comprise men who, to say the least, know as much about the principle as we do, and employ as much labor; and even the House of Commons in England has approved of it. It has also been adopted in the sister colonies; and these, too, even in times of depression, when those colonies had difficulty in making both ends meet, the principle of a living wage has been adopted and adhered to in connection with their public works. I am surely not asking for anything unreasonable in asking that this principle, which has done so much good elsewhere, should be adopted now in all the Government employments in this colony, when the finances are so flourishing. A suggestion was thrown out, during last

Session, in reference to the evils of sweating that the provision which is said to exist in all the Government contracts for public works, prohibiting sub-letting, should be strictly enforced. I believe this provision stands now as it did before, but it is not enforced, and there is no penalty to deter contractors from sub-letting. I believe the Government do desire to prohibit sweating and to abolish sub-letting, in connection with public works; but surely, if they seriously intend to prevent these evils, they should be wholehearted enough to insert some penalty in their contracts which will effectually strike at sub-letting, and make their contracts operative. Reverting to the Customs tariff, I hope the Government will take the opportunity, or that those who are protectionists will take the opportunity, of rectifying some of the grievances under the existing tariff. There are several industries requiring protection, as there are also articles which are now taxed simply for revenue purposes, which we cannot produce in this colony, and the taxes on which should be abolished at once, now that the Government have a surplus revenue to deal with. What I want to see is taxation imposed on protectionist lines. The hon. member on my right is connected with an industry in the City of Perth, which would be the means of employing dozens more men, under a protectionist tariff, not heavier than exists elsewhere; and there are numerous other industries which would flourish in this colony under protection, now that so great a local demand is springing up. Those hon. members who represent squatting and farming constituencies should not forget that we have given an enormous amount of protection to squatting and farming and rightly so. Do not forget that your flour and your stock are protected by direct taxes. I would go even further and say again as I have already said, that a line of steamers should be subsidised to serve the Northern ports, particularly for bringing fat stock to the Southern markets. We have also to pay a large annual amount for making up the deficit caused by the cheap fares on our railways for stock, produce, manure, etc., and we do not object to that; but we do ask those hon. members whose constituencies enjoy these benefits not to be selfish in the matter. We say that farming in this colony is more protected than any other industry, and we ask you who represent farming constituencies to give some protection to those industries in

towns which require protection to enable them to prosper or even exist. The Electoral Act referred to in the Speech certainly needs amending. We have all recognised, for various reasons, the absolute need of some amendment. The subject has been brought forward on several occasions in this House; and we shall all welcome a Bill for amending the grotesque absurdities of the electoral law. The Bill promised in the Speech may be a good amendment or a bad one, but let us hope most fervently that it is going to be a good amendment, on thoroughly liberal lines, for unless, it is so, the electoral law cannot be satisfactory. You cannot tamper or temporise with the question of registering voters—it has got to be dealt with thoroughly and liberally, and an amendment which makes the law no better or but little better than before will not be satisfactory. It has been already pointed out that a redistribution of seats is required. I do not think that heads alone should be counted, without regard to other considerations. I quite recognise that we should look at the various interests which are represented. I recognise that the squatting interest should have a representation in proportion to the enormous amount of country occupied for pastoral purposes, and the great amount of wealth which the squatters represent. (AN HON. MEMBER: Is it wealth?) If it is not wealth to the country, what is the good of the squatters, and what do you want to protect them for? I say they do represent some wealth in this community. Whether the squatters themselves or the banks nominally own the properties is beside the question, for they belong to the colony in either case. I appeal to the sense of justice of those hon. members who represent pastoral or agricultural constituencies, and may be opposed to the redistribution of seats, and who form the great majority, in this House; and I ask, have not the squatting interest and the farming interest got a somewhat larger representation than they ought to have? The purely commercial constituencies are few in number, and the commercial interests ought to have more members to represent them. There are three constituencies in Perth, and three in Fremantle; but even in these constituencies the agricultural interest is represented to some extent, for West Perth, with its outside district, is partly a farming constituency, and East Perth also is partly a farming constituency. The same may be said of South Fre-

mantle, which is partly a farming constituency. There are, therefore, only two, or, at most, three, really commercial constituencies in the colony; and, that being so, is not the remainder, after excluding the three goldfields, too large a proportionate representation for the farming and squatting industries? [AN HON. MEMBER: Geraldton is a town constituency.] No; the hon. member should be aware that Geraldton includes a large farming district, and squatting influence is very strong there. But, taking it for granted that Perth and Fremantle are purely commercial, there are six purely commercial constituencies only, and I ask, is that a fair representation of the commercial interests of the colony? I think most strongly that further representation should be given to the principal towns, and also to the goldfields, and it is only right that these should have a larger proportion of the representation than they have at present. There are several members of this House who, although not returned for squatting or farming constituencies, are, nevertheless, strong supporters of those industries, and are largely interested in them personally. The Federal Council is referred to, and I desire to express my disappointment at the manner in which the Government exercised their power of appointing delegates from this colony to attend the last meeting of the Council. In reading the report of the Federal Council's debates, I noticed that one delegatesaid he was pleased to see around him 25 of the leading statesmen of Australia! Well, I do hope that if this colony has to be again represented at a meeting of the Federal Council, the Premier will allow the delegates to be appointed directly by the House. Delegates so elected would carry much more weight than if nominated by the Premier or by the Government, as they were on the last occasion. I suppose that during the course of this session we shall have an opportunity of dealing with the question of a Privy Council Judge, and I shall take that opportunity of expressing my strong dissent from the action of the Federal Council. I suppose we shall also have an opportunity of discussing the attitude taken up by our delegates on the question of Federation. I am satisfied that Federation will never become a burning question, if it is to be dealt with by members who have been elected, not to deal with the question of Federation, but with other questions that have absolutely nothing to do with Federation. I have a whole-hearted belief in Fed-

eration, and I cannot realise the position of men who approach a great question such as this, and talk about it as if they were talking about the conflicting interests of Perth and Fremantle. If we had Fremantle with a separate tariff as if it were a separate country, and if we had Perth with a tariff of its own, as if a separate country, and a question were to arise as to the amalgamation of these two so-called countries, then exactly the same arguments as have been used in this House in reference to Federation might be used in reference to the amalgamation of Perth and Fremantle. If we obtain complete Federation between the colonies of Australia, with internal freetrade and protection against the world—(The PREMIER: A good phrase, that)—then the question as to whether Western Australia will benefit more or benefit less is just as much beside the real question at issue, as it would be to discuss now whether Perth or Fremantle would benefit most by a particular measure passing through this House. We realise now that the benefit of Perth or the benefit of Fremantle is the benefit of the whole colony; and in discussing the Federation of Australia, we should approach it in the same good spirit. We shall never obtain Federation unless those who are earnest in the matter will make some effort to bring it forward. Federation is coming some day—don't forget that—and to those of us who are natives of Australia, this question of Federation appeals more strongly than it does to those among us who are, so to say, importations. Do not forget that Australia is our home; and we want, if we can, to build up in Australia, a nation that will be worthy of the great nation from which we have sprung. I say, confidently and fearlessly, that those who were not born in Australia cannot realise what "home" means to those who are Australians, and cannot realise the force with which the federal sentiment appeals to us. The more this purely Australian sentiment comes into force among the populations in Australia, the stronger Federation becomes. I rejoice in that fact, and you may be sure the more strongly that feeling grows among those who are Australian born, the stronger will be the Federal movement in the several colonies, until beneath the Southern Cross we shall have a Commonwealth, under which shall grow a nation worthy of those great nations from which our fathers came. But if we are to have a great question like this approached

by men who treat it as a beadle might treat the affairs of a small parish, then the sooner these men are wiped away, and broader-minded men are brought forward, so much the better. I rejoice in the fact, which has been so often mentioned in this debate, that Federation is not yet a burning question; for it is when questions are burning, when passions are roused, that you run a risk of having a Federation which would not be the best possible kind; but now when everything is calm, and now when the most thoughtful minds in Australia are in favor of Federation—I repeat the most thoughtful minds in Australia; I hope those hon. members who are interjecting remarks will grasp that, and I am glad to think I can humbly follow—now, when there are no side issues to warp, or prejudices to blind us, is the time when this question of Federation may be approached without excitement and without pressure. What is the good of a Government or a Premier coming forward and saying, “I am going to bring forward a measure now because I am forced by public opinion to do so?” Anybody can do that. But the man who wants to make and deserve a name is the man who is capable of leading before agitation arises, and when there is no popular pressure urging him in a particular direction. We have in this colony, in our Premier, a man who is capable of leading us on this question, and I hope he will do his best to promote the Federation of this colony with the other colonies of Australia. I very fervently hope that now, when we have an overflowing Treasury, we shall agree to the adoption of a direct and general system of taxation. Another important question which is bound to crop up—and I am sure the Attorney-General will agree with me in this—is the drink question. I do not want the Government to commit themselves at present and offhandedly, to a measure of state control over public-houses—I do not want them to go so far as that—but I do think our present Licensing Act might be made very much more useful than it is, by adopting, as additional provisions, some of the good features in the Gothenburg system. I do not believe in granting licences to mere beer-shops, for there should be a limit in that direction, and the sooner a check is applied the better. We might adopt a system of classification according to the rateable value and accommodation afforded by the premises.

Classes for instance should be made which might require certain accommodation of a more or less expensive character in proportion to the population of the licensing district, and this accommodation should be compulsory on all licences—old or new—as the population of a district grows. We might also provide that there shall be not more than one bar in a hotel, and that it shall be so situated as to be open to the public view. There are important features in the Gothenburg system, which might be adopted and such amendments of our Licensing Act would have a good effect in retarding the drinking habits of this colony. I think we cannot have a better time than the present for dealing with these questions, for the Government having passed their Loan Bill, embodying their scheme of public works, there remains for Ministers only the Departmental supervision necessary for the due execution of those works. We ought to have payment of members too, and now is a good time to adopt it. Personally, I do not care whether it comes or does not come; but it is just in principle and just in practice, and we ought to have it. Almost as important as that principle is another—namely, that having great public works to undertake or complete, we ought to have what is called a Betterment Act, especially in connection with the construction of railways through occupied alienated lands. I think the Premier himself must be often worried, as he was the other day, by the requests of deputations who want railways. Every district wants a railway, and every district will urge the want of that railway unless you pass an Act for throwing on each district some fair share of the cost of constructing the railway that is required. If you had a Betterment Act, you might set at rest a good deal of the agitation for local railways and other works, some of which we know would be almost useless if constructed. Such an Act, which is in operation to some extent elsewhere, would be just in principle; in our method of carrying out public works at present, we are paying not only for the indirect benefit which the colony gets, say from a railway through a country district, but we are paying also for the direct benefit which the district gets. The honorable member for Nannine has told us he is in favour of Civil Service Reform and of the early closing of shops in towns. The question of Asiatic immigration I understood was going to be dealt with by the Government, and I

should like to know whether we are to have any measure, this session, dealing with Asiatics. Last session I brought in a Bill on the subject, but it was not accepted because, as was said by Ministers and others, the subject was one which only the Government could properly deal with. I want to know, therefore, whether they intend to deal with the question this session. If not, I will again introduce the question. There are other questions which the Government might also take in hand. I have referred to numerous matters, but I do not suppose any of us will expect the Government to adopt and deal with all of them. I think, however, that every member will agree they all are important matters, which will have to be dealt with sooner or later, and they are matters which require a strong and able Government for carrying them through. We have got a strong Government; I believe we have got an able Government; and I do ask them to justify their power and their ability by something more than the works they have undertaken so far. We are not going to judge them by the money they borrow and spend, because even Chinamen are borrowing money; but we are going to judge them by the principles they adopt, and the measures and policy they bring forward. I say, fearlessly, that no Government in Australia, and no Premier in Australia, has ever had, or will have, the powers and opportunities of the present Premier and the present Government in this colony; and I do ask and beg of them to use that power and these opportunities in a manner that will help us to settle, once and for ever, a great number of those questions which, if they have to drag on year after year, will cause a lot of heart-burning and passion which would be avoided by timely and judicious legislation. The opportunity and the power are in the hands of the Premier at present, and I ask him again to show that he is worthy of that unique opportunity and that magnificent power.

MR. CONNOR: As we have heard so much eloquence from the gentlemen who sit on the Opposition side of the House, there is not much left to be said by members sitting on this (the Government) side. I will glance through the different items mentioned in the Speech of His Excellency. First of all, as the hon. member for Sussex, has said, I must join in the chorus of congratulation. We cannot help being pleased to be in a position to say the colony is in a sound condition financially, that

the credit of this colony in the English market is absolutely unapproachable, and that no other colony and no other people on the face of this earth to day have a better record, or can go into the market with more confidence and say "We want to borrow your money, and can give good security for it." Everything has gone on to the entire satisfaction of the people of the colony, as far as the financial business is concerned. A great deal has been made by members on the Opposition side against the administrative work of the Government Departments. We have been told that they do not carry out what has been entrusted to them in a sufficiently good manner. But I would ask members on the other side to take into consideration the fact that at any rate we are in the soundest possible financial position—that we are in a position to borrow more money than the colony requires at present; and that is what possibly no other colony in Australia can say. A great deal has been said on the question of Federation. The hon. member who leads the Opposition, whose remarks, I suppose, are to be taken more notice of than those of other members on that side, has told us he is opposed to Federation. Well, I am not opposed to it, although that opinion may not suit some hon. members on this side of the House. In the next breath the leader of the Opposition told us he was in favor of taking off the Stock Tax. To my mind the only opposition that can be offered to the idea of Federation is the effect it would have on taxation in particular colonies; yet the hon. member who leads the Opposition in this House, told us he was opposed to Federation.

MR. RANDALL: I never said any such thing. I said there was no feeling in the other colonies such as would make Federation a burning or pressing question at present.

MR. CONNOR: Well, that is the sense in which I understand the hon. member. In the next breath he told us he was in favor of taking off the Stock Tax. As a very humble member of this House, and one representing an outside constituency—possibly I may come in for one of the metropolitan constituencies, later on—I say it should be our aim in life, as colonists of this great country, to federate and make Australia a great nation and a great country. The only objection to Federation that I can see at present, is taxation. I might refer also to other hon. members on the Opposition side of the House, and their consistency on this question of Federation *versus* Taxation.

The sixth paragraph of the Speech refers to the Collie coalfield railway. When I had first the honour of addressing the intelligence of West Australia, as exemplified in the presence of hon. members here, I said I was in favour of building a line of railway to the Collie coalfield, given that it was proved that coal existed there in quantity sufficient to warrant the line being built. I was one of those who visited that field by invitation, a few months ago, and what I then saw satisfied me that, in the interests of the colony, it is absolutely necessary that a railway to that coalfield should be built. I must admit that, before I went to the field, I was rather opposed to the idea of a railway being built there at the expense of the country; but what I saw there satisfied me that the line should be built. Not only have we got magnificent coal deposits there, but there is also splendid jarrah timber all the way along.

MR. R. F. SKOLL: All the way along? Well, you saw what I did not.

MR. CONNOR: Does the hon. member insinuate that I have more eyes than he has? Paragraph 5 in the Speech refers to the Bridgetown railway, and I may again say that I am not prepared to support that railway proposal at present. I do not see that it is absolutely necessary that all the money which is being borrowed through the undoubted credit which the colony possesses should be put into speculative agricultural railways. I think the mining industry deserves more consideration at present than even the great agricultural interest, and, before building a railway to Bridgetown, I would suggest that a line of railway be built in the North-West, to connect the Pilbarra goldfields with the coast, and give facilities to develop mining which—no matter what some hon. members may say—is the backbone on which we have to depend for the continued success of this colony. Hon. members may not know particularly well that some of our best goldfields are in the Northern portion of the colony. We have Marble Bar, Pilbarra, and others in the North-West, and even despised Kimberley will come up again. Reference is made in the Speech to deep boring for artesian water on our goldfields. It will be remembered that, some time ago, I brought forward a proposal for deep boring on our goldfields, but it was opposed at the time from the Government benches and these cross benches. That motion was in favor of deep boring with

diamond drills, and I take it as being rather a feather in my cap that the Government have now come to the conclusion that the only way to get large supplies of water on our goldfields is by artesian boring. I shall be very pleased to support the Government in their suggestion that they will try to obtain artesian water, and the general hope of members in this House is that they will succeed in getting it. Paragraph 9 refers to the purchase of the West Australian Timber Company's concession, and I think the Government are to be commended for that. I hope also that, if the opportunity comes—and I hope it will come soon—the Government will arrange to buy back the Great Southern Railway and the Midland Railway from those companies, and so make a huge system of national railways. If the Government do that, they will be still more commended, and the country will thank them for having done so. Some members seem to think that, because the Midland Railway Company in England, the London and North-Western Company, and other great companies have made a great success of their railway management in England, therefore the system of building and managing railways by private companies is the best, and that it is a mistake for the Government in this colony to build or manage any railways on behalf of the public. But the circumstances of railway company management in England are so different from the circumstances here, that I cannot agree with the idea of private companies holding lines here. I believe, on the contrary, that the State should receive the entire and absolute benefit of working the public railways in a country like this, in order that, with the increasing revenue we are now receiving from them, the people may be relieved from such duties as the Stock Tax. Paragraph 12 refers to the making of stock routes in the North. Well, I sincerely hope, and most hon. members will agree with me in hoping, that these stock routes may prove a success. But, on the other hand, I have had some personal experience in the North, and I say this plan will not be a success—the conditions are against success. I say, at the same time, let the Government have an opportunity of trying to make it a success, if they can. The hon. member for East Perth said all that is really necessary to help the squatters in the North is to subsidise steamers for carrying fat

stock to the Southern markets, as is done in several other parts of Australia. As to the Fremantle harbour works, I am very glad to know these are progressing satisfactorily. I am also glad to know that the probabilities are we are going to get two new dredgers. I want to know what they are for? I want to sound a note of warning to the hon. members who represent Fremantle with regard to that. They are coming, not simply to be kept down at Fremantle, but to dredge the Perth waters, in order that ships may pass up and down between Perth and Fremantle. That is one of the things which I hope they will be required to do. Get two more, and then in the next Speech we shall have it shadowed forth that we are going to have two more; then we shall have six, and it will not take them long to dredge 12 miles. I will refer later on to the question which is supposed to be the question of the day, namely, the removal of the Workshops from Fremantle to the Midland Junction. In reference to the Mint which it is contemplated to establish in this colony, I do not wish to pose as an authority on these matters, but I can give the opinion of a gentleman who is intimately acquainted with the subject, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, and he says it is only possible to make one Mint pay in these colonies. He says the New South Wales Mint will pay, but the Victorian will not. That was his opinion expressed to me two years ago, and since then it has been proved to be correct, for the Sydney Mint has paid whilst the Melbourne one has not. If you establish a Mint here, I shall not object to it, so long as there is sufficient reason shown that it will not be a too expensive advertisement for the colony. I do say this however, that the Hon. the Treasurer of this colony needs to be very cautious indeed before establishing a Mint here. Mr. Macdonald Cameron gave me some figures, which fully satisfied me that it was not possible to make any other Mint pay, beside the one in Sydney. It is shadowed forth in clause 17 of this great Speech, that there will be some alteration in the Goldfields Act and Regulations. I think that is absolutely necessary. I do not think it is a breach of confidence, or I would not refer to it, but there was a Select Committee appointed last session to enquire into that Act. I was a member of that committee. It met, I believe, on several occasions, but only of one meeting did I receive any notice, before it was adjourned. I would respectfully sug-

gest, if any such committee should ever be appointed again, that every member should get notice of every meeting. I want to say there is one great defect in this Speech, and that is, that it does not shadow forth the fact there will be an alteration in the Constitution Act of this colony. Honorable members on this side of the House may not like it, but it is my opinion that representation in this colony is not what it should be. When this House was first elected there were about 50,000 inhabitants in the colony, and we had the same number of members then as now, whereas now we have nearly 80,000 inhabitants and only the same number of representatives.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No, we have three members more.

MR. CONNOR: Well, then, we have three more representatives, but we have increased nearly 50 per cent. of population, and what is the increase per cent. of the representatives? I say we have a right to increase the representation. The people of the goldfields have a right to more representatives than they have at the present time. I will not go into particulars; my opinion may not be worth much, but I believe the larger centres of population in this colony have not sufficient representation. I will not deal with the matter further, but that is my opinion. There is another alteration that should be made in the Constitution Act to prevent another such fiasco as occurred at the recent election for North Fremantle, when people who had a right to the exercise of the franchise and a right to vote were disqualified. I think, perhaps, it was an oversight, and I will not go into the particulars, but an alteration should be made in the Act, so that such a thing should not occur again, as that 100 people justly entitled to vote should not be able to do so.

MR. GEORGE: That occurred in other constitencies.

MR. CONNOR: We have heard a good deal about surplus revenue, especially from the other side of the House, as though because there is a surplus in the revenue something terrible was going to happen to the Government. I could easily suggest means to get rid of some of it. During the recess the telegraphic communication, of which we hear so much between this and the other colonies, was stopped. Now I would suggest if all this money is in the chest, and this surplus revenue is such a terrible thing, one of the best things



it can be expended upon would be the building of a telegraph line from West Australia to join the overland telegraph line of the Northern Territory of South Australia.—I would suggest between Hall's Creek and the Southern portion of the telegraph line of South Australia. I think that would do away with the deadlock that happens when communication is interrupted between West Australia and the Eastern Colonies. I hope the Government will not think it presumptuous on my part in suggesting this to them. Upon the matter of railway rates, I may say I had the honor to wait upon the Hon. the Commissioner of Railways on this subject in conjunction with the hon. member for Beverley, and we laid some figures before him upon which he promised to reduce the rates, particularly upon live stock, but that has not yet been done. I think it absolutely necessary it should be done, and the sooner it is done the more popular the Hon. Commissioner of Railways will become. Now, Sir, we have heard a good deal about the Stock Tax, though I do not intend to go into it in detail, we have heard a tremendous philippic from the hon. member for East Perth against everybody having anything to do with stock, for he practically says the squatters should be snuffed out in one act.

AN HON. MEMBER : No, no.

MR. CONNOR: Practically he said it. He means centralization,—do everything for the town and nothing for those outside. I consider I have as much intelligence as most other hon. members in this House, and I wish to say supposing this Stock Tax were taken off,—and I do not object—could you have free trade? "Take it off," said the hon. member for East Perth; but he did not give us anything else in its place. Yes, he did refer to the subsidizing of boats to carry down stock from the north. He did not give us any detailed reason why we should do away with the Stock Tax, nor what he would suggest as an equivalent for the producers. I would suggest what would be a good thing, and what would tend to the taking off of the Stock Tax. When this House was sitting last session a Select Committee was appointed to enquire into the stock routes, and the question of cheaper meat. One of the recommendations of that committee was that public abattoirs should be built somewhere. I gave evidence before that committee and recommended that it should be done. One omission in this Speech

is that the recommendations of that committee have not been taken notice of at all. Now, if it were worth while to appoint a Select Committee something more should have been done, and if the hon. members who sit on the opposite side of the House regarded this question as a burning one, we should surely have heard more about it. There are enough of them to criticise the Government, there are always enough to do that, whether they are right or wrong, but I cannot help referring to this question, for it should have been the duty of the Government to make some reference to it. It will do away with the Stock Tax for ever, if you only give facilities for bringing stock in, and provide abattoirs. If you want to make meat cheap—I do not want to talk shop here, but I think I know as much about this question as most hon. members—and I say, if you want to make a reduction in the price of meat, you need to build public abattoirs, and so reduce the expenses in connection with killing cattle, sheep, and swine, for you thereby reduce the cost of the upkeep of large establishments, which are kept up here at large expense to the people of the colony. Now, sir, we come to the burning question, the removal of the Workshops. I am opposed to their removal from Fremantle. I think that is pretty definite, and I will give my reasons. First, it would be an absolute injustice to the people of Fremantle to remove them. They have what has been called vested interests. They have their vested interests in Fremantle, in connection with these particular works; you have men who came to the colony, and others who have been born here, and have families of their own, who have built their homes there, and expected to live in them; but, if you remove the workshops, the houses and lands of these people will not be worth what they gave for the land alone years ago. The second reason I would give is, there is no necessity for their removal. We are told the reasons for removing them are two; one is that there is not room enough, and the second is that the sea air oxidizes the machinery. The first reason is no good, because I have seen a plan, bearing the signature of the Engineer-in-Chief of this colony, according to which we are to have 126 acres of land reclaimed at Fremantle, and this in addition to all other land which the Railway Department and the Government hold down there. I cannot very well say how many acres they hold there at

the present time, or how many acres the Workshops cover, but I think quite two acres at present. Now, they have 126 acres to reclaim, according to plans duly drawn to scale, bearing the signature of the Engineer-in-Chief. Where then is the necessity of removing these workshops 22 miles inland, when they will have all this land available, if the harbour works are a success, which we all hope they will be? They will have all these 126 acres, and according to the Engineer-in-Chief, they will not require more than 10 acres for the workshops, out of 126. There are other reasons which I could give against their removal, but these are quite sufficient; they are reclaiming 126 acres and at the outside all the room they require for the workshops is 10 acres. I do not see the slightest necessity for their removal from Fremantle. The Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands made reference to some business that occurred in this House, when he gave that Speech of his at Roebourne. I hope I am not out of place in referring to it. He said: "I tried for £20,000 for the North, but Mr. Connor said he must have £5,000 for the Kimberley district, and he would not be induced to forsake his idea. The upshot was, that rather than have a split in the camp, I and other Northern members gave way to Mr. Connor, and eventually we got £10,000 for Pilbarra, and £5,000 for Kimberley, but I believe we could have got the £20,000 had we acted unitedly. It was rather hard on me that Mr. Connor should get the credit of the vote when he almost endangered the prospect of it." Sir, I would like to point out to the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands, that I am not prepared to come here at any time to ask hon. members to pass any vote which is not just. I did not ask for anything more than was just, and if the Hon. the Commissioner were to ask for anything less than was just to his constituency, he would do wrong to them. I am not taking blame to myself. I did not know that I possessed sufficient influence to get hon. members to do anything which they would not do for the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands. That appears in his address, and, as I am a representative of the North, and have many friends in the North, I just wished to refer to it to show both sides to hon. members.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon.

A. R. Richardson): Sir, shall I be in order in making an explanation?

THE SPEAKER: You will have an opportunity after the hon. member has finished speaking.

MR. CONNOR: Sir, my alluding to this matter is not in any sense a censure on the Hon. the Commissioner, but to correct a wrong impression, and I have taken this opportunity of doing so. I think the Hon. the Commissioner can reply if he chooses to do so. There is just one other word about the Stock Tax while I am boring the House. The leader of the Opposition told us here the other night that the Stock Tax was 25 per cent. of the value of the cattle sold. I think I am right in saying that. I took the item from one of the daily papers to confirm myself, though I heard the statement made by the honorable member for Perth. I wish to correct that, for it gives a very wrong impression. I will give the House some figures on this point. The statement is that the Stock Tax represents 25 per cent. The last lot of sheep that were sold by a firm I know, sold at 34s. each; duty 2s. 6d., which represents 7 per cent. The last lot of cattle sold at £14 8s.; duty 30s. per head, which is 11 per cent. That is on sheep and cattle. Seven and 11 per cent., added together and divided, means 9 per cent.; and, allowing 1 per cent. on that, leaves only 10 per cent., which is not so heavy a duty as is paid upon boots or clothes or anything else of that kind, which cannot be produced here.

AN HON. MEMBER: Cannot we produce boots?

MR. CONNOR: No, not very well; we have to import boots from England. There is just one other matter I would like to refer to here, and that is: I made some calculations as to the rate at which we could borrow money, and it works out thus,—I overlooked this when I spoke in the earlier part of the evening; I would like to refer to it in a few words—This last great loan, which we were supposed to borrow so cheaply at 3½ per cent., at a premium of £3 1s. 4d., means, if worked out, we borrowed the money at the rate of £3 7s. 10d. That seems to be fairly satisfactory, but I do not see why we cannot improve on that. At present money can be borrowed on fair security, in England, at a little over 2 per cent., and, while our securities are as good as they are, I do not see why we should not improve on that. The hon. member for Nannine

was very strong indeed on the 17 members who, he said, always voted on this side. I think he reiterated that a great deal, and I want to tell him I do not know whether I am included in the 17, but I am not afraid or ashamed if I am so included, for I consider I am quite as independent as any other members who sit on the other side of this House.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): If this House has time and will allow me I will vary the entertainment a little, and let the House see a Minister on his feet to speak. I am not going to discuss the question as to whether or not it is better to speak on the subjects of the Speech at this moment or later. I do not know that I can do anything better than first of all express my thanks to the hon. members of this House who have spoken on the Address-in-Reply, for their kind reception of the Speech which has been delivered by His Excellency the Administrator. What has been said has been full of criticism from some parts of the House, and undoubtedly we sit here for our acts to be criticised, but it cannot be doubted that there has been an absence altogether of anything like ill feeling imported into anything that has been said by hon. members who sit opposite or on the cross benches. The hon. member for Albany has spoken at some length and has turned the Speech of His Excellency the Administrator upside down and inside out, and he told us he could not find anything in it. I understand the reason why he could not find anything in it, because I attempted for some considerable time to get a note of what the hon. member was driving at, but failed, except that he complained the Speech was inordinately long and more a history of the past than the present, and in that perhaps there was some truth, as may be some members knew what the Government had been doing during recess. It seems not to suit some if it said anything about what had been done in recess, and it did not suit others if it did not deal with the future. The hon. member for Albany had found fault with it on this point, and had tried to dig into the future, but he must not expect the future to be unfolded too rapidly.

MR. LEAKE: That is what we complain of.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, (Hon. S. Burt): The hon. member might not be able to stand all we had to tell him. I have not much to answer in the speech of the hon. member for Albany. I listened with much attention

and obtained a good deal of information from the remarks of the hon. member for Nannine, who complained that the Speech was all length and no breadth. I doubt very much whether the hon. member thinks that. His remarks reminded me of some of his golden reefs up at Nannine, which have no breadth but are very long. He complains that there is an absence of breadth in the Administrator's Speech, and he says more than a word or two in making very serious objection to the hon. members who support the Government lauding, as he says, the Ministry, when they were simply expressing the joy which they all sincerely felt about the state of the colony and the Forrest Ministry at the head of it. I think that it is what the hon. member objected to. He objected too to hon. members constantly telling him that all these good things were brought about by the Forrest Ministry. I deny that anyone on this side of the House ever attributed the position of the colony to the Forrest Ministry, certainly the Ministry never did such a thing. We say, certainly, that the credit of the present position should be attributed to the fortune of the colony, in the discovery of the great goldfields which exist at the present time, but we do undoubtedly claim this, that we have endeavored to hold the ship straight in the progress she was making, and at the same time to obey the behests of Parliament. The hon. member for Nannine got quite wild in his address to the House, in contradicting the assertions made that the credit of the present position was to be ascribed to the Ministry; he says, give honor to whom the honor is due, to the miner far afield with his life in his hand; well, we do, and we welcome him and want to see more of him as he is represented. I will, perhaps, say a word or two more on that subject before I sit down. The hon. member charges the Government with being inimical to Federation, but there is nothing in the Speech to show that the Government are in any way opposed to Federation; far from it. All that the Speech says is that it is not a pressing question at the present time, and in that the leader of the Opposition agrees, and the hon. member for Nannine agrees. Why go to Hobart if you were against Federation, he says? Well, I have told him the Government are not against it and they never said they were. The question of Federation had nothing to do with the Government inviting Parliament to send members to Hobart. We joined the Federal Council, and passed an Act to send members.

MR. SIMPSON: Not this Parliament.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): This Parliament increased the number. It was not content with sending three, but increased the number to five. The hon. member for Nannine said Federation occupied a leading place among public questions at the present day in Australia.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I said, Sir John Downer said so.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Yes, but you quoted Sir John Downer with approval, and said the great benefit of Federation would be that we should have intercolonial freetrade, with protection against the world. Why limit it? Surely that is not the thing to look to—to have intercolonial freetrade with protection against the world. If there is anything in intercolonial freetrade—I do not know whether there is anything in it, but if there is, surely it is better to have extra colonial free trade as well. I was glad to see the hon. member admitted, if the railways paid,—which he questioned—then his objections to the management fall. I do not expect any one to accept the statement that the railways pay unless he chooses, for every hon. member can ask for the information and satisfy himself on the point that the railways do pay. I am glad, I say that the hon. member admits, and he has always spoken very fairly; that if it can be shown that the railways do pay then all his objections to the management fall to the ground.

MR. LEAKE: Not all.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Undoubtedly, all or nearly all.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That covers a multitude of sins.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Then the hon. member got to the question of the removal of the Workshops. Every hon. member seems to get to that question, but it is one that on this occasion I desire to avoid, for as Attorney General I have very little to do with it. I have been listening attentively to the arguments whether they should be removed or not, and I have been reading what hon. members have said in the past, or what they are reported to have said in the past, and that history is not quite consistent with what has been said in this Chamber within the last few days. The hon. member for Nannine said the removal of the Workshops

was a something he could not fathom, and he could not find any reason for the Government perpetrating such a job as this. If he could find a reason surely it could not honestly be called a job. We are not told where the jobbing comes in, but his main objection is the unnecessary carriage of goods over the William-street crossing, and he did as all other members have done who are opposed to the removal, he goes to find a site; that is the interesting part of this question. Every hon. member who is opposed to it goes to find a site, but the one thing is never to go in the direction of the Midland Junction. The hon. member for Nannine starts North-West from Rocky Bay where there is plenty of room, 100 acres can easily be made up; well now, if you go North-West from Rocky Bay you get to the sea beach, or pretty close to it; so I say the hon. member for Nannine's choice of a site is on the beach. But that is not what he said last year, for then he was inclined to favour a site at the Midland Junction near Guildford. The fact is the hon. member has been sitting on a rail on this question. He knows where the best sites are, yea, he knows where the best site is and that it is near Guildford, but when he finds that it is likely to be brought before this House he tries to get credit by backing up Fremantle. I will show for the benefit of the representatives of Fremantle what the hon. member told us last year.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I have learned better since then.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): The hon. member in speaking on this subject last year could not help letting out what was in his mind, and he suggested the absolute necessity of another site, in support of which he quotes the discredited Mr. Allison Smith, to show the absolute necessity, the immediate necessity, of removing the shops from their present site. He wanted to leave it an absolutely open question, but desired to provide that no more money should be expended upon a site that was universally admitted not to be the right one. He said, "Something has been said about the extra haulage of coal, if the shops are moved to Guildford. Have we not the Collie coalfield, which is nearer to Guildford than Fremantle?" Surely he is here taking up cudgels for the Midland Junction, and backs up his argument by saying it would be adjacent to the Midland Railway, which he contended was practically not a private line. Now I say anyone reading

that speech, made last year, will get at the inner mind of the hon. member for Nannine. There was a site he would select, but it was not to the north-west of Rocky Bay, but somewhere east of Perth, a nearer spot, to which the haulage of the Cellie coal would be less than to Fremantle, and that was near, not a private railway, but a public one. Now I express no opinion for my own part about the Fremantle Workshops at the present time, because we are open to conviction on this point. The Premier has promised Parliament shall deal with the question. The hon. member for North Fremantle, when speaking on the Speech, fell into an error in dealing with the minority report of the Commission that was appointed some years ago. He said that report was a most excellent report, which I have no doubt but it is, but the object of that report was simply and solely to show that the site of the Workshops at Fremantle was a good one, and that they ought to stop where they were. That was the object of that excellent report of the minority, not to move the shops at all; but every one has receded from that position now. That report is no help to members.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** It proves too much.

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt):** Yes, far too much. The hon. member for Nannine, and others, have referred to the question of re-distribution of seats, and the large influx of miners into this country. Now we all wish these miners success, for if they are not successful they are not very desirable colonists, because they have no other trade, and have no occupation if they cannot find gold. They become discontented if they are not successful, and therefore it is unjust to ask the Government of this colony at the present time in the year 1895, to enfranchise these miners until it is proved they have got something like permanent employment.

**THE SPEAKER:** I would remind the hon. member that the time for adjournment has now come. This debate now stands adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House, in accordance with Sessional Order, at half-past six o'clock, p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, 3rd July, at half-past 4 o'clock, p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 3rd July, 1895.*

*William-street Railway Crossing—Raid upon Fletcher police station, East Kimberley—Train arrangements for Pinjarrah—The townsite of Parkerville—Employment of Dredges—Agricultural Hall for the Canning—Contract for the construction of Mount Eliza Park Road—Construction of Subiaco (Cemetery) Road—Address-in-Reply: adjourned debate—Licensed Surveyors Bill: first reading—Emoluments and Salaries of Australian Governors—Public Buildings at Cue and Coolgardie: extra cost of—Cost and operations of Agricultural Bank—Plans of Railway Workshops—Traffic receipts, Southern Cross Railway—Adjournment.*

**THE SPEAKER** took the chair at 4.30 p.m.  
**PRAYERS.**

#### WILLIAM-STREET RAILWAY CROSSING.

**MR. GEORGE**, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways,—

1. Whether he considered the measures taken in connection with the Melbourne-road Crossing and the William-street Crossing were sufficient to secure the safety of the general public.
2. Whether any measures were contemplated to increase the precautions already taken.
3. When these measures will be put in force

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn)** replied, as follows:—

1. Yes; I consider the measures at present taken for the protection of the public at the Melbourne-road Crossing are as safe as it is possible for the Department to make them under existing circumstances.
2. Further measures are in contemplation for the Melbourne-road Crossing, which may include gates.
3. In regard to William-street, every possible precaution is taken by the Department for the safety of the public in crossing; but the Government have finally decided to erect a bridge, and this work will be put in hand as early as possible, when funds are voted by Parliament.