

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 30th November, 1905.

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir George Shenton) took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1, The Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, 1896, Regulations. 2, (a) The Land Act, 1898, Regulations relating to Improvements on Reserves set apart for Public Bodies or Institutions; (b) Regulations restricting Cutting of Timber on State Forest at Boorara. 3, The Permanent Reserves Act, 1899, "B" Reserves. 4, Report of the Department of Mines for the Year 1904.

SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

On motions by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, committees for the session were appointed as follow:—

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—The President, Hon. M. L. Moss, Hon. H. Briggs; with leave to sit during any adjournment, and authority to confer on matters of mutual concernment with any committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Assembly.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.—The President, Hon. W. T. Loton, Hon. Z. Lane, Hon. R. F. Sholl, and the Colonial Secretary as mover; with power to act during the recess, and to confer with any similar committee of the Legislative Assembly.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.—The President, Hon. J. W. Hackett, and the Colonial Secretary as mover; with leave to sit during any adjournment and during the recess, and authority to act jointly with the Library Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.—The President, Hon. G. Randell, Hon. M. L. Moss.

RETURN—GOVERNMENT OFFICES RENTED.

On motion by Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY, ordered: That a return be laid on the table showing—1, What Government Departments rent offices in Perth for the purpose of carrying on their business 2, The terms for which such offices are leased. 3, The annual rent paid. 4, If such rent increases annually.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

THIRD DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous day.

HON. R. D. MCKENZIE (North-East): In addressing myself to the question before the House, I wish first to add my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your return from the old country in restored health. I also extend my congratulations to the electors of the State, for the satisfactory results of the recent general elections. We have now what has been termed a stable Government, instead of another House having three distinct parties, two of them about equal in number, and a third party able to hold the balance of power. We have now two parties, the one returned with such a majority that the Government will be able, without hesitation or fear, to bring in such legislation as they think is for the good of the State. It will be our duty in this House, and no doubt we shall feel the sense of responsibility more this session on account of the state of parties in another place, to revise such legislation in order to see that the mere fact of the Government having such a large majority shall not be to the detriment of the State. The Speech of His Excellency mentions that the annual Estimates will be brought down in a few days. Although we must realise that it is not the fault of the present administration that the Estimates have not been brought down earlier in this financial year, I agree with what Mr. Loton stated yesterday, that the Estimates should be brought down much earlier in the year; and therefore I trust the present Government will see that in future Parliament shall meet earlier, and that the Estimates will be placed on the table soon after the financial year has closed. It would be suitable to most members if we were to meet early in June, and the Estimates be

brought down towards the end of July at the latest. In all commercial and financial institutions, I may say it is the rule not to give consideration to estimates when half the year has gone by; and I feel sure the present Ministry will rectify that practice in Parliament which has prevailed too much in the past. Most speeches made by State Governors in Australia refer to the fact that the finances of the State require close attention. It goes without saying that the finances do require close attention, and also that we should have careful and economical administration. The present Government will not have the excuse of saying as a fact that they have not a majority which would enable them to pursue economy; and so it behoves them right away to put the pruning knife in and economise to such an extent that they will be able to make the expenditure and the revenue meet. Exactly how the Government are going to get on without farther taxation I cannot say, in face of the fact that month after month we notice a deficiency as between the expenditure and the revenue. Still it is refreshing to hear from the speech that no farther taxation is required, with the exception of a totalisator tax. This tax I am sure everyone will agree with. The only objection that is likely to be made to it is that most of the racing clubs which will be affected by the proposed tax have been in the habit of contributing liberally to charitable institutions in their several districts. I can speak with knowledge of the practice of the Kalgoorlie Racing Club, which has been in the habit of donating at least £500 per annum to two of the local charities; and if this totalisator tax is to be imposed on racing clubs, it may be unfair to expect that they should continue these charitable contributions, I am one who believes that the revenue of the State is so large and so buoyant that it will be possible for the Government to get along without increased taxation. A great deal will be expected of the present Government because of the splendid working majority they have been given by the country; and I think it will appeal to them that they have a great responsibility put on their shoulders in the distribution of the revenue of the State. I, for one, hope that we shall not

hear that word "centralisation" used when we are criticising the different disbursements. I trust the Government will see that all sections of the community get a fair share of the expenditure. In the Speech mention is made of the fact that the Government intend to apply for a farther loan authorisation. I do not know whether Mr. Loton has inside information, but he mentioned the fact that works contained under the head of money to be spent from loans will take something like two million pounds. Looking through it myself I could not say what amount the different works would cost. In the first place we have harbour improvements. We have heard from Captain Laurie, who is a competent authority on that subject, that farther improvements will not be required in the Fremantle Harbour for some years to come. Therefore I have been exercising my mind to some extent to know what harbour improvements were going to take place. I wondered whether the Government had decided to open up the harbour at Esperance and were going to build the railway to Esperance from the goldfields. If they do that, I can understand that they will probably require something like the two millions mentioned by the hon. member. Whilst on this question of harbour improvements, it was a surprise to me and I am sure to other members—and I am certain that other members like myself feel regret—to hear my hon. friend, Captain Laurie, inform us that he has decided to sever his connection with the Fremantle Harbour Trust. This will be a distinct loss to the State of Western Australia, and I hope that he will reconsider his decision. Other items mentioned under loans are spur lines, about which we have heard a lot from agricultural members, increased water supplies to the goldfields, stock routes, boring for artesian water supplies in the North and North-West, and a sewerage scheme for Perth. I am pleased to see that the Government intend to extend the water supply scheme on the goldfields. I presume increased water supply means that they are going to extend the Coolgardie Water Scheme. It has always appealed to me as a business proposition, when we have such a large quantity of water at Mundaring

and have the machinery and the pipes to pump at the rate of five millions or five and a half millions of gallons per day to the goldfields, that we should extend the scheme to any centre where they are likely to use any large quantity of water. We have had too little information, I think, as to how the Coolgardie Water Supply is getting along. I tried yesterday to get some information from the records of the House as to the quantity of water being consumed daily; but I failed in my endeavours. However, I got a certain amount of satisfactory information from the department itself. I am sure members will be pleased to hear that the consumption in October of this year was well over five million gallons in advance of the consumption for October of last year. Satisfactory reductions in price were made during last year by the late Government, and have been appreciated by the people of the goldfields; and I think this increased consumption shows that appreciation. The Speech goes on to say that the legislation that we are to have submitted to us for this session is not of large proportions, and I am one of those who think this is a very satisfactory statement. I prefer to see better administration and less legislation going on in this House. However, I do not intend to touch on any of those Bills that the Government propose to bring forward, because I realise that on the second reading members will have an opportunity of addressing themselves to these measures. I would just like to say a few words as a goldfields member on a question which is of very great importance to this State, and that is the development of the mining industry. We are told in the Speech that the development of the mining, agricultural, pastoral, and other industries is most gratifying. I am rather surprised to hear this about all these different industries, especially when a Minister is present who a little while ago, at one of the agricultural shows, told the farmers that the mining industry, if it had not passed its palmy days, at least was going from its palmy days at the present time. In the face of that we are told that the development of the mining industry is most gratifying.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was the Minister for Lands who made use of those expressions.

HON. R. D. MCKENZIE: I can hardly agree with the statement to which I refer. There is no question that the mining industry is languishing at the present time. When I say the mining industry, I mean to connect with it the prospector and the opening up of new mines. So far as the Kalgoorlie mines are concerned, the lives of them are assured for some considerable time to come. I think we are too prone to look on the mining industry as being those mines in and about Kalgoorlie. A good deal of attention has been drawn during the past week to some interviews and speeches made by a prominent mining engineer from London. It is a good thing for the mining industry that gentlemen such as Mr. Hoover should come out here and that they also should express their candid opinions on our industry. At the same time, I do not consider Mr. Hoover has broken any new ground. I think if the records of the State Parliament are turned up here it will be found that many members have held out a note of warning in connection with prospecting. I remember distinctly that in the first speech I made in this House, in moving the Address-in-Reply, I said the prospector was the backbone of the industry in the last resort; and there is no question that he is. We cannot get away from the fact that we have a decreasing output, and also the fact that during the past few years we have had no new mines of any consequence opened up. The mines we all know so well are not getting richer; in fact they are getting poorer every day. All the rich ore has been taken out down to the 1,000ft. level, pretty well taken out; and they are now on low-grade ore. Fortunately, the cost of working low-grade ore has been reduced very considerably. Ore can now be worked producing from 5dwt. to 7dwt., whereas two or three years ago at least from 12dwt. to 14dwt. was required. There is a tremendous decrease in the prospecting going on in this State, and I think it behoves us to see if we cannot devise some scheme whereby we can get the prospector to go through the auriferous parts of the State and prospect. I think Victoria is a fair example. Most of the mines there were discovered in the very early days, and people did not realise the importance of

keeping the prospecting going on. The consequence has been that the industry is gradually languishing. I feel sure no one will make the statement that Victoria has been thoroughly prospected; neither has Western Australia; and it will be many years, even if we are active in prospecting, before this great State will have been fully prospected. I do not know whether it has struck most members, but it has often struck me very forcibly, that the question of the discovery of new mines in Western Australia is of very great importance, not only to the goldfields, but to the whole of the State, and to the whole of the people of the State. However, Mr. Hoover said the other night that 10,000 miners were employed in connection with the mining industry in this State. I do not know what the population is on the goldfields of this State, but I should say roughly it is somewhere about 80,000. Consequently, if Mr. Hoover's figures are correct, every miner employed carries on his back a population of seven other people. Therefore, every new mine that is discovered in this State must be of great importance to the mining districts, and also to Perth and to the agricultural districts. One member asked me just now how it was possible to encourage the prospector. I must admit it is a most difficult problem. It is a problem I have been considering for many years. I have attended prospectors' associations to see if we could glean any method from them whereby we could get over the difficulty. It seems they are not able to solve the problem. Perhaps it is from the fact that they are a scattered body of men and get the opportunity only once in a year to meet, and then only for a few hours. At all events, at their meeting I was able to glean nothing of very much use to me in making any recommendations. It seems to me that in the first place we should make the lease a prospector holds perfectly secure, and my own opinion is that as few restrictions as possible should be placed in his way. He should be able to take up a prospecting area by virtue of holding his miner's right. When I say prospecting area I mean that, even about Kalgoorlie, if a man wishes to take up an abandoned lease he should be able to take it up without having to pay any

survey fees and without having to pay any rent for at least two years, if not more. If he showed his *bona fides* by working for two or three months in the year, he should be allowed to go away for the other nine or ten months and work for wages, and then come back to the lease again and prospect it thoroughly. That would be one way of assisting the prospector. I realise that it is almost impossible to place a sum of money on the Estimates to assist him. The prospector is a class of man who does not want money given to him. It would be a difficult matter to know how to distribute it so as to make use of it. All he wants, so far as I can see, is to be left alone and to be able to hold a lease without any undue restrictions. I doubt whether there is any other question of such importance to this State to-day as the one I have now been discussing; and I hope something will be done now we have Mr. Gregory back in charge of the Mines Department. He is a man who has had a great deal of experience, both before he entered Parliament and since he has been in Parliament, and also since he has been Minister for Mines. I trust he will give this matter such attention that he will be able to bring some scheme before the Legislature that will solve the difficulty. Mr. Hoover in his speech mentioned that the mines, as we know them at present, did not require any assistance, that all they required now was to be left alone, and that they (those connected with mines) did not want us to interfere with them to any great extent by new legislation. I think members will recognise that there is a great deal of common sense in what Mr. Hoover says in that respect. I think we should be careful in any legislation we enact in this House that is likely to interfere in any way with the mines as they are to-day. The population on the goldfields are very thankful to the State for having supplied them with such a good water supply. As a matter of fact, this has been such a dry season that I do not know how the districts up there would have done had it not been for the splendid water supply we had. The only thing is that the scheme should be worked in a thoroughly business-like manner. I believe it was the original intention to work it under a board; but I notice that

each succeeding Government has decided that it should still be administered by the Minister for Works. It is just a question as to whether the Minister is the best man to administer the scheme. It always appeared to me that it would be better if there was a commercial man, who knows the surroundings on the goldfields, to work in conjunction with the Minister and the engineers of the department in administering the scheme. I should like to mention that, quite recently, there has been an agitation for the extension of the scheme to Boorara and Bulong. The Government have decided to extend it to Boorara, and I believe the works are now in course of construction. I should like to have a word to say in favour of the extension to Bulong. The population there is not large, but there are many prospectors at work, and though there are only one or two mines, with cheaper conditions of living and with cheaper water to work the ore I believe the district will have a big future. I would recommend the Government to extend the scheme to Bulong as soon as they reasonably can. In reference to the question of immigration, it has just struck me during the past week or two that it would be admirable for the State if we followed the example of Victoria so far as dairying is concerned. We all know the terrible state of Victoria on the burst of the land boom. Wheat farming and dairying did not pay. When the Government first turned attention to the dairying industry, they started with a travelling dairy and taught the farmer how to make butter. Now it is a matter of history, the splendid record the Victorian farmers put up in exporting butter. I think this State is just as good a State for the production of butter; and we should be exporting butter, instead of importing it as now. It was very refreshing to me to see in the papers one or two days ago that one of the Victorian bacon manufacturers had come over here to establish a factory. This ought to be an incentive to farmers to go in for breeding the right sort of swine to make it a success. The State imports a large quantity of bacon every year; and instead of being importers, I hope in a few years to see that we are exporters of that commodity. As a goldfields member, I can assure members from the agri-

cultural districts that the goldfields people entertain no dog-in-the-manger feeling towards them. We are as anxious to see the agricultural and pastoral industries progressing as we are to see the mining industry progressing. There has been a good deal of agitation during the last year or two in connection with immigration. I am a believer in immigration if we can get the right kind of immigrant, but the difficulty has been in Western Australia so far that we have not been able to find the right men. At the same time, I conscientiously believe that if an impetus were given to the mining industry and new discoveries were made, there would be a large influx of people into this State; and no doubt history would repeat itself and the surplus population from the goldfields would gradually find its way to the agricultural districts. I was in an agricultural district for some years in Victoria, and most of the settlers there were men from Ballarat and Bendigo who had accumulated a few hundred pounds and taken up selections; and almost without exception they were successful. I believe if more attention were given to prospecting for gold and other minerals, it would be the best means of directing population to Western Australia. I have much pleasure in supporting the Address-in-Reply.

HON. M. L. MOSS (Honorary Minister): I shall leave to the Colonial Secretary the duty of answering the various matters alluded to by hon. members. Originally it was not my intention to take up the time of the House at all; but I find it quite impossible to allow certain statements which have been made outside this House, and which have appeared in public prints, to pass without notice being taken of them on the floor of this House. I have made no secret for a long while past—certainly my attitude in the House and country for over two years has indicated clearly that it was my desire to see a stable Government established in this country; and on numerous occasions I have objected strongly to the machine politics controlled by the caucus vote, and my action with regard to the party that was in power in this House by means of this caucus vote was not underhanded at all. Even my political enemies will credit me with being perfectly open, and with doing my level best to bring about in fair fight an end

to the chaos to which the Government of this country had arrived at the end of last Parliament. It is absolutely necessary that I should make every allowance and give every consideration to those people. Though it is thought inexpedient that I should attempt to take notice of the attack which has been made upon me outside the House, nevertheless I am not going to allow statements to pass unnoticed which have gone beyond the bounds of fair criticism. I do not object to receiving criticism from either public men or the Press of this country, so long as it is based on accurate facts; but I have a decided objection when what is probably intended to be criticism has as its basis matters which, well, are not facts, but pure concoctions and inventions in the imagination of those people who invent them, with the object of satisfying themselves for the moment in the attack they want to make on me. What I did at the last election was perfectly open. It is said that it is inexpedient for a member of this Chamber to take up as strong a position as I took up; but I was actuated with one desire, to see such a strong Government put into power and that the affairs of this country should be managed in a way that would leave no doubt about the advance of its material interests. In fact, for the greater part of the last two years the least idea I had was that I should be a member of the Government that was to succeed the Labour Government. I was never an applicant pushing my claim for Ministerial office. When the Premier invited me to join this Government, I joined it because I believed that we had in the party in power, one whose aim and object and desire were to advance the interests of the country. Speaking particularly for the Premier, I have no hesitation in saying that if attention to duty and hard work would achieve that end, it should be achieved at a very early date. I have been accused of standing outside the polling booth at East Fremantle with a roll in one hand with the intention of influencing electors to vote for the Government candidate, Mr. Holmes. The gentleman who accused me also hoped that no member of the party he was associated with—I presume the Labour party—would ever be guilty of fiddling about a polling booth on election day, and

said that such an act was to be deprecated. I do not desire the advice of this gentleman as to the methods I should adopt outside this House; but it is a deliberate untruth to say that I was outside the Caledonian Hall polling booth with a roll in my hand, and that I was fiddling about the polling booth influencing votes. Whatever I did I am not ashamed of, and I make this statement regarding it now. Originally it was not my intention to be in Fremantle on polling day, but I was appealed to to be present at a small committee room that Mr. Holmes's supporters had provided on the opposite side of the road to the Caledonian Hall; and there I controlled, on behalf of Mr. Holmes, a committee of ladies and gentlemen operating in his interests on election day. I think I am making a truthful statement when I say that probably at the outside it was only on three or four occasions that I was on the side of the road on which the Caledonian Hall is situated, and those occasions were not longer than a minute or two. There are hundreds of witnesses to bear out my statement that I was all that day under the verandah of this committee room directing operations. Another gentleman has made a statement to which I take greater exception than I do to the remarks to which I have just alluded. He almost apologises for the statement he makes by remarking that it is only "hearsay." I regret that he did not endeavour to ascertain the accuracy of his statement before making it. He said that a few minutes before the close of the poll at the East Fremantle election, some lumpers who were working on the other side of the river crossed in a boat and went to the Caledonian Hall to record their votes, and that they were met by the Honorary Minister and told that they were not allowed to vote at that hall because they lived nearer another polling booth; also that they went away and did not record their votes. That is a deliberate and wilful untruth, and it is either untrue to the hon. member's knowledge, or the statement is made with such a reckless disregard as to whether it was true or not, that it is just as bad in my eyes as if it were a deliberate untruth. The statement is also made that notes were sent by

me into the Caledonian Hall during the day that men were to be challenged. That is another deliberate untruth. The method which Mr. Holmes's committee adopted in connection with the election rendered it unnecessary for secrecy in regard to that. Mr. Holmes's organisation was complete. A type-written list, 13 sheets of foolscap, containing some 450 names of persons absent from the State, persons who had been absent from the State for three months or more, and persons who were dead, was given to the four scrutineers at the four polling booths at East Fremantle, with instructions that if any person presented himself or attended at the booth in the name of any of those persons, such personator was to be challenged in the method prescribed. Several persons did attempt to vote and were disqualified; they attempted it at more than one booth; but the organisation was so good, and they being challenged were bound to admit in most cases that it was no good trying it at another polling booth, as they were sure to be bowled out. There was no necessity for me to send any communication to the scrutineers, as the organisation was so complete; and the statement which has been made that these notes were sent in is a deliberate falsehood, or has been made with such a reckless disregard to truth that it is as bad as a deliberate untruth. My actions so far as this election is concerned were absolutely above reproach; and if any inquiry is to be made about the elections at Fremantle, I above all others court the strictest inquiry. I fought very hard on election day and on the day preceding the election, helping others in this State to define the issue and make certain that in this country we should either have a Labour party in power or a party opposed to it, and that we should not be confronted with the difficulty which had landed the country in the state of chaos which we experienced during the last sixteen months. I can afford to be generous in treating those people who have taken an unfair advantage of me, and I make every due allowance for them, knowing they are smarting from the defeat they sustained; and possibly they think that I, who have taken a considerable interest in the election, am a fit subject to attack. I have no desire to detain the House by

making observations on His Excellency's Speech. I leave it to the Colonial Secretary to perform that duty on behalf of the Government.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): I, like other members who have already spoken, feel great pleasure in seeing you, Mr. President, back in your place again, and I hope you have benefited by the change. I also congratulate the House on seeing Mr. Kingsmill again in the position of Leader of the House, and I am sure his pleasing face gives us satisfaction. I am sure also that we must recognise that the House is under an obligation to Mr. Moss, who has been in a Ministerial chair so often. We are pleased to see him there, and I am sure he will render us as much assistance in the future as he has always done in the past. Mr. Moss always acts in an open and manly way, and I am sure the House will support him in carrying measures which he thinks desirable. There are very few more straightforward men than the hon. gentleman. I now briefly pass on to make a few remarks with respect to the Governor's Address to the House, but I do not know that I can add anything to what has been already stated. I consider a very instructive debate has been entered into by members who have already spoken, and a great deal of practical knowledge has been introduced and some very good ideas put forward, which certainly ought to result in benefit to the country. I may say this is the first time in my experience we have had two Governor's Speeches in such a short interval, and I trust now with the result of the last election that we have a Government fully alive to the importance of dealing with measures in a united and desirable way, and in such manner as will lead to the future advancement and prosperity of the country without obstruction. We are told that the State is progressing, and I am sure we are all glad to learn that this is the case and hope it will continue to do so. There is an advancement in the mineral, agricultural, and pastoral industries. We are all fully alive to the importance of those industries; but in the matter of mining I think it must occur to a great many that it is remarkable no fresh developments are taking place. We cannot think that all the good things were dis-

covered in the early days and that no more can be found. There can be only one reason for no farther discoveries being made: there is not that amount of prospecting and searching going on which existed in the early days. People have got indifferent, or find that it requires more capital than they have in order to develop the mineral industry. Therefore, there is not the same amount of prosperity that we saw taking place after the first discovery of gold. I consider that is the reason more discoveries have not been made of late years. Nothing can be done to advance the interests of the country more than to assist the prospector. The prospector not only requires assistance in the initiatory stages, but he requires assistance after the discoveries have been made. Therefore I think that in the interests of the State the Government should do all they can to assist the prospector. We are told that there is a satisfactory increase in the production of other metals. We hope this may turn out to be the case. We think there is a sufficient amount of copper, iron, and other metals that may hereafter prove productive and add to the wealth of the State. But there are so many parts of the world where these metals are obtained at a cheaper rate than they can be obtained here that I do not think it will prove productive to deal with them. The copper smelter at Ravensthorpe has given satisfaction. We sincerely hope that the remarks in the Governor's Speech may turn out to be correct, but up to the present this copper smelter has been disappointing. This may be in consequence of not being able to develop the ore thoroughly. I know of my own knowledge that in that country there is a large amount of minerals, and there should be a good future for them. The agricultural prospects of the country are improving day by day. This is indisputable. We see the settlement going on and increasing in every part of the country. One has only to go into the survey office and look at the maps to be astonished at the amount of settlement shown there. I do not think it is wise for the Government to try to encourage settlement on lands too far from a railway or too much out of the rainfall area. In many instances it may not be satis-

factory. The question of immigration is undoubtedly one of very great importance, but I would like to see a more liberal spirit entering into this question. I would like to see even the coloured races introduced here. I would like to see everyone who wishes to settle in the country avail himself of it, because I am sure it will tend to assist materially many of the industries which now lie dormant. I do not see why the white man for all time should have all that is here. Any one possessing ordinary intelligence should be able to employ these coloured races at a reasonable rate. It is the only way that some of the industries can be developed in this country. We know that the development of all our industries is delayed through not taking advantage of the coloured races, and I do hope that this prejudice will gradually diminish, and we shall use this description of labour from China and Japan. If we do not admit the Japanese here willingly, they will be here whether we like it or not. In dealing with the matter of immigration, I would like to see immigration encouraged. There are some people here who never try to do anything for themselves, and who try to discourage others. If these men were to emigrate it would be a desirable thing for the country. I find in the Speech some reference to roads. I hope the Government will not forget what a wet season we have passed through, and the indisputably bad condition in which the roads of the country have been left. We are told that the finances of the State require attention. I sincerely hope that the present Government, in their wisdom and by their united efforts, will be able to effect considerable economies, and to construct, without additional taxation, the many works necessary for the advancement of the country. I trust they will be able thoroughly to investigate the different departments, and to effect reductions where necessary, always bearing in mind that a good man is worthy of his hire, though it may be impossible to retain the services of men who are not required. The Speech mentions many important public works, most of which I am sure we all admit to be necessary and to be of a reproductive nature. I certainly agree with Mr. Randell as to the undesirableness of continually borrowing money to

construct desirable public works. At the same time, I contend that if money is not borrowed for public works, we shall wait a long time before the works will be obtainable; therefore I think it is at all times justifiable to borrow money for such works as are necessary and likely to prove reproductive in a very short time. I certainly object to borrowing money for other works. As to the Bill for the imposition of a tax on totalisators, I think it will receive general approval; but if the scope of the measure is extended to all racing clubs in the State, I think it will have the effect of abolishing the totalisator in small country racing clubs, unless the percentage to be taken by the Government is so reduced as not to affect such bodies. Clubs like those at York, Katanning, Northam, and other outlying neighbourhoods—I apologise to the member of the district for calling the club at Katanning a small club—these clubs can never afford to give away $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of their present totalisator takings. Mention is made in the Speech of the desirableness of improving the stock routes. Stock brought by land from northern stations suffer considerably from want of water; and much can be done if the Government will at all times do their best by boring to obtain a proper water supply. Large numbers of stock will shortly be brought from the Kimberley districts *via* Leonora to the goldfields; and there is nothing to prevent this save the want of water. If such a route were open and available, it would lead to a sufficient supply of meat at all times for goldfields consumers. A route could be surveyed from Leonora to such point in Kimberley as might be desirable. With the details of the proposed sewerage scheme for the metropolitan area, I will leave some more experienced member to deal. In a large city such as this a sewerage scheme is necessary; and I hope the matter will be taken in hand and brought to a proper conclusion. I trust sincerely that Ministers will work together in the best interests of the State, that we may have a bright and prosperous time before us, and that for a long time to come there will be no farther change of Government. I have pleasure in supporting the adoption of the Address.

HON. J. A. THOMSON (Central): I too am pleased to find that you, Mr.

President, are once more occupying the position you have occupied so long; and I hope you will be spared to occupy it so long as there is a Chair left to occupy. I shall be very brief in my remarks. I hardly see the utility of speeches on the Address-in-Reply, unless the speakers are satisfied that by their great ability or their great influence they will be able to sway the Government so that Ministers will alter the policy put into the mouth of the Governor. That, in my opinion, would be the only excuse for members speaking to the Address-in-Reply; because surely it is time enough for members to speak on the measures foreshadowed when those measures are at their second-reading stage. I should not have spoken had it not been that I wished to sound a little alarm, or rather to beat the big drum, in regard to the immigration scheme which the Government have in hand. I may tell members that I volunteered to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Immigration, and made known my desire to the chairman of the Commission. I was not sent for—I suppose because that gentleman first asked me what kind of evidence I was prepared to give, and what I knew of the subject. I said that if called I should be able to tell them what I knew of the matter; and I thought that ought to be quite sufficient. However, I may say that I have lived some 24 years in Australia, and for nearly 14 years in Western Australia, and have travelled throughout the length and breadth of not only this but all the other States of Australasia. I was brought up to follow farming pursuits in the old country, and am well versed in farming pursuits, have twice visited the old country since I came to Western Australia, and my last visit to the old country was very recent. If such a person is not capable of giving some information to an Immigration Commission, I do not know what the Commission was sitting for. I may state at once that it is absolutely a throwing away of money to bring men to this State unless we are assured that they can find employment when they come here. True, I am at one with members of the Government, with hon. members who may favour this immigration scheme, and also with members of

the Royal Commission, in devising plans to bring to this State suitable people, if suitable people can be found and retained here when they come. But can we retain such people? Probably we can retain people of a sort. Some men and women, when brought out here, find the conditions of this State so vastly different from the conditions in the place whence they come that they get dissatisfied, but are unable to leave. They are naturally paupers. We shall be able to retain these; but surely we have already enough of that class. The other class of people—men with a little money—we may induce to come here; but are we likely to retain them? What are they to do when they come here? First of all, we tell them there is plenty of land for them to occupy and use. Most of them, if they are at all cautious and have a little money, will prefer first to get used to the strange conditions, and to acquire some experience of Australia before spending any of their own money. Those are the right class of people; they are very shrewd, and know what they are about. I hope we shall get plenty of that class, who have money, and who are not prepared to spend it until they acquire the necessary experience to make them successful and worthy citizens. But the majority of the immigrants who have money are not prepared to work for other people in order to gain experience. They take up land themselves, and they remain perhaps for twelve months. If they remain for two years, there is some hope for them. But after twelve months, most of them find the conditions so vastly different from those of the old country that they become utterly disgusted with the place; and if they have enough money left they go back to whence they came, and give us a very bad name.

HON. C. A. PRIESE: Give us one instance.

HON. J. A. THOMSON: There are hundreds of instances, as the hon. member must know, because he travels about the country as I do, and he has plenty of agricultural experience. How many settlers has the hon. member in his mind who have come from the old country and have stopped here? A few, perhaps; but few indeed compared with the numbers who have come from the other

States. These are the people whom we ought to encourage to come here. Of course it is not very nice to the other States that we should hold out inducements for their best people to come to Western Australia; but nevertheless, these are the only settlers of benefit to the agricultural lands of this country. If we had plenty of industries here to employ any number of people who came to our shores, then it would be proper for us to adopt an immigration scheme to induce anybody and everybody to come here; but until we can find employment for immigrants, we are doing a great wrong by inducing anyone to come here from the old country—a wrong not only to the people we may bring out, but also to the taxpayers whom we are calling on to contribute towards the introduction of people who will only go to swell the number of the unemployed. I speak with some knowledge of the facts; and I hope I shall convince the Government—else I would not speak at all—that it is not right to spend the money of the taxpayers in bringing to this State such people unless we are sure that they can find employment when they come out, in order that they may take up land and may have some money to pay for improvements; in order that they may not remain here as a burden on the people of the State.

HON. W. MALEY: We have too many Jeremiahs.

HON. J. A. THOMSON: I think so. I may explain to hon. members why I am perfectly satisfied that the best class of men from the old country will not settle here. During my recent trip to Great Britain I spent most of my time in my native county, Aberdeenshire; and I found that the conditions of life in the rural districts were about the same as when I lived there 23 or 24 years ago. Ploughmen, men who look after cattle, and other labouring men on farms are not in Scotland called labourers, but domestic servants; and as domestic servants they have always been known. Every six months there is a feeing market at which men are engaged for six months at an average wage of £15 for the period; and they are found food and proper bed-linen and everything by the employer, and their beds are made by the domestic servants of the house. If they

are the servants of a small farmer, they sit at the small farmer's table with his own people. If they are servants of a farmer in a bigger way of business, they have a servants' hall to dine in and their proper houses to sleep in; and, as I have remarked, their beds are provided, also clean sheets every week. How many farmers in Western Australia—I speak again with experience—or in any other State of Australia provide any such comfort for their farm labourers? They hire them by the week, and if they have work for a week, a fortnight, or a month, well and good. If they have work for them and the men come up to their expectations, they will keep them on; but if they have no more work for them they send them adrift. Would any farm labourer in Scotland be altogether better here than there? I do not wonder at the number of drunken people, drunken farm labourers, I come across in Western Australia, because it is owing to the conditions of life these poor people live under. I admit that there are many worthless ones, but unfortunately we have to put up with them. It should be our desire to get only the best class we can and to endeavour to make the worthless ones a little bit better, and in my opinion that can only be done by doing a little bit better for them by extending a little bit of human nature, a little bit of kindness to them. Treat them as human beings, treat them as one of the family, and we shall get better work from them and prevent them going so much to the public-house. I will conclude my remarks, because I have said quite enough and have unburdened myself of what I have been longing to say for a long time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill): Permit me first of all, sir, to offer my congratulations to you on behalf of the Government of which I have the honour to be a member on your return to the State so much better in health, and I hope that while you may have very many pleasant trips in the future, none of them will be with the object of the last one. I should like to thank members for the extremely complimentary remarks that they have made about the policy of the Government as foreshadowed in the Speech which His Excellency delivered at the opening of Parliament; also for those

remarks which have been made about the result—may I be permitted to say the happy result—of the last elections; likewise the remarks about myself, and which should be made to a far greater extent even about my honourable colleague, to whom I owe so much, my friend Mr. Moss. It is not my intention to reply in detail to all the remarks or to touch upon all the subject which have been touched on by members during this debate. It was somewhat of a surprise and at the same time of considerable interest to me to find that the debate which I thought was only going to last a few minutes spun out for several hours, but I feel the time which I have spent in listening to those remarks has been well spent, because we have had undoubtedly some very valuable contributions to our parliamentary and political knowledge afforded during the debate which has now closed. In all the Addresses-in-Reply which I have listened to in this House, not very many certainly, but in those I have listened to it has always been customary I notice for the Lands Department to come in for a certain amount of rough handling, and I may congratulate that department that the handling it has received on this occasion has been rendered more gentle. The criticism has been less caustic than is usually the case. Mr. Piesse, who generally leads off the attack on the department, was I thought this time very much milder, and it much surprised and pleased me to find that at last he has found something to congratulate that department upon. It is true that later in his speech he discovered certain other things about which he was not quite so enthusiastic in the same direction; but taking the speech as a whole I think it was distinctly of a less, shall I say hostile, character than those delivered on previous occasions. I look to his contribution to the debate and also to the contribution of my predecessor in this House, Mr. Drew, as being essentially valuable, and I am pleased indeed that the Lands Department has the support of two such able gentlemen. Connected with the affairs of the Lands Department is a question with which I have had a good deal to do, and which has been touched on by several members during this debate. That is the subject of immigration, regarding which I have

listened at all events with a good deal of interest to the remarks of the gentleman who has just sat down; remarks which I hope and feel sure are somewhat pessimistic. I would first of all like to explain the system of encouraging immigration which is in vogue in this State, and of which I am sure, from their remarks, some members are not cognisant. We have three classes of immigrants coming to Western Australia. The first class, and in my opinion, looking at the matter from a more or less liberal spirit, the class to which we owe a good deal, is a class which I think needs the least encouragement. I refer to those people who come from the Eastern States. As I have said, those people have undoubtedly done a great deal to open up the district to which this State owes very much, the Great Southern District; and with regard to them the system is in vogue that the Government usually, when solicited by persons who have blood relatives in the Eastern States, advance to the person making application here such moneys as will cover the fares of those blood relatives from some portion of the Eastern States to Fremantle or to Albany. That money has to be repaid, and that repayment has to be guaranteed by a responsible bondsman. A large number of persons come into Western Australia under this system, but it has been used not so much in the development of our agricultural areas as in bringing over wives and families of people who are living and have settled down upon our goldfields. That in itself is an extremely good object, and I am glad to say that whilst prepayment is not always made, in the great majority of cases the Government are able to recover the money advanced from the immigrants themselves or in default from their bondsmen. Again we have another class of immigrants. We have a class consisting of persons nominated as assisted immigrants from Europe by persons not necessarily relatives, but some friends in Western Australia. In that case half the passage money is paid either to my own office in Perth or to the Agent General's office in London, and in this case there is a guarantee that on the voyage the Government shall be free from liability for any further expense incurred by those people; and there is a certain amount of responsibility I believe, morally if not

legally, taken by those persons who nominate them for assisted emigration. Again, there is a third class of immigrant, and it is the third class of immigrant to which I wish to allude—the immigrant nominated at the Agent General's office in London. The system has in the last few weeks been somewhat changed. Instructions have been sent to the Agent General that in this case only persons who announce their intention of settling on the land and who will land in Western Australia with what is considered by the Government a sufficient amount of capital to give them a start shall be entertained as desirable immigrants on this basis. I think that is a reasonable proposition. I consider it a proposition which even Mr. Thomson can find no fault with. That hon. gentleman seems to think that this Government is starting with the idea of importing farm labourers. I have travelled about the agricultural districts in Western Australia a good deal during the last few months. I have made it my duty to inquire from all the farmers, all the representative men employed in agriculture whom I could meet, as to how their requirements are being fulfilled, both with regard to quality and quantity, in relation to agricultural labour, and I am glad to say that, so far from there being the same state of things as existed some two or three years ago, now we find that the great bulk of the farmers are fairly well satisfied. They say they can get agricultural labour. They have to pay what they think is a somewhat high rate for it, but they assert that by paying that high rate they can undoubtedly get competent work done for them. At all events the state of affairs with regard to the supply of agricultural labour in Western Australia—a supply which was sadly wanting some little time back—is becoming very much better, and the people whose immigration to this State the Government wishes to secure, and wishes by every means in its power to encourage, are those people who will become at the start small farmers, and who I hope will in time become large farmers. As Mr. Thomson says, it is one thing to get these people here, and it is another thing to keep them when we get them here. I do not think there is any chance that the supply will be found failing in

Great Britain. I take it—if I am wrong I shall instantly be contradicted—that the lot of farmers in Western Australia for the past few years has been far better than the lot of any other farmers I can think of. There is no doubt about that. If the soil is not quite so fertile as that in the Eastern States and other parts of the world, we have a climate that is all that can possibly be desired for the pursuit of mixed farming. We do not suffer from the droughts which prevail in the Eastern States, nor from the rigours of that winter which is never mentioned, I notice, in the Canadian advertisements, but which nevertheless renders Canada so hard a country for farmers to carry on what is undoubtedly the most profitable style of farming—mixed farming. As my colleague says, the Canadian as a rule shows signs of the utmost impatience if the mere word “winter” is uttered in his presence. One gentleman to whom I spoke to-day, who came out from England, says that in Canada they do not recognise such a season. The Canadian immigration agent never recognises as existing in Canada such a season as the five months’ winter that does exist and acts so detrimentally to agriculture in that country. But in our State of Western Australia we have a climate which cannot be surpassed for the mildness of its winter. For years past the farmers of Western Australia have enjoyed markets second to none in the world, and for years to come they will enjoy them. Some members, talking about bad times ahead, go to meet trouble half-way. So far as we can see into the future, if the farmers turn their energies in the right direction, the good times that existed in the past will continue. And is it not even probable that the immigration agents we employ in England should be able to pick the best immigrants that may be able to come to the State? And these are the best people we could get. [HON. J. A. THOMSON: They will turn round on the agent with a gun.] We have had some of these people here, and I have not as yet heard of any agent meeting with such a fate, nor do I anticipate it. Once we have the people here, it is undoubtedly the duty of the Government to make their lot as pleasant and profitable as possible. With that object, when we get notice of the arrival of immigrants by a

steamer sailing prior to that conveying the immigrants, we make arrangements to have them met by an officer from the Colonial Secretary’s Department; and all the information that the immigrants would be likely to require is given to them. They are told where they can get lodgings cheaply, as cheap and as good as can be obtained. In cases where it is absolutely necessary, lodgings will be provided for them—that is, for the wives and children of the heads of these families whose duty it will be on landing to go round the country, assisted by the Agricultural Department, in search of the land for which they came to Western Australia. We are endeavouring to perfect the system to as great a degree as possible, and have made strides in that direction during the last few weeks. It is a subject that comes under my control, and I shall endeavour to devise means to keep these people as contented and prosperous as possible. There is another matter which I feel some diffidence in touching upon, because it is liable to land me in difficulties; but it is almost inseparably connected with land settlement and immigration. I refer to a question alluded to several times during the debate, that of the construction of spur railways. I should like to start off by saying that the Government will have the fullest information before them, both from engineering experts and from agricultural experts, before deciding on the routes of those railways; but the Government are settled in the determination that, so far as these railways are concerned, they shall not be, so far as the capital cost goes, adding a heavy burden to the State. It is impossible for a railway that is carrying agricultural produce, the cheapest class of freight except minerals, to be over-capitalised. We have experience of railways that are over-capitalised. We have the York-Greenhills Railway, constructed at a cost of approximately £4,000 per mile. This is purely a spur railway and is used for the carriage of the cheapest class of freight. It is impossible for a Government to expect a railway constructed on that standard to go anywhere near paying anything like interest, let alone sinking fund, on the expenditure. The Government believe that the standard of these railways can be cut down, though the safety of the

lines will be well assured, and that a speed quite sufficient for the purpose for which they are to be built may be obtained. In spite of the remarks of hon. members about the first 15 miles of such railways being practically useless because that area can be served by the main lines, I feel perfectly certain that spur railways will be a valuable adjunct to the main railways. Undoubtedly, they will pay indirectly, and if we can keep the capitalisation down low enough, they will encourage settlement sufficient to pay in the future. It is unfortunate that we have to build the first 15 miles to get at the rest of the railway, but members must not lose sight of the fact that, though the first 15 miles of a spur railway may be useless, the scope of a spur railway will extend 15 miles beyond the terminus. [HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: What is wrong with loop lines?] I was going to touch on loop lines. If the hon. member will look at the map of Western Australia from an agricultural standpoint he will admit that most of our agricultural country runs in strips, and that not many of these are wide enough to admit of two main lines of railway, because, after all, a loop line must be a main line running parallel to the other. Farther, if the hon. member goes into figures he will find that a greater result can be achieved for a similar mileage by spur railways than by putting down railways as loops. Members will not expect me at this stage to make the speech that will be necessary when I am moving the second reading of some of these Railway Bills which I hope it will be my good fortune to bring down to the House. I can assure members that when the second reading of these Bills does come along, the Government will be fortified with ample reasons and with the fullest possible information to lay before members. [HON. J. W. HACKETT: With the anticipated revenue?] With regard to that, the revenue anticipated from any spur railway for the first year or two, or for five years, must be distinctly disappointing. The Government propose to put down these railways with the object of encouraging the agricultural industry and agricultural settlement; and we expect them, for the first few years at all events, to pay more indirectly than directly; and as soon as they begin to pay directly, I hope the first action of

the Government will be to improve the standard of the railways, because we can always build the standard up, though we can never pull the standard down if we build too expensive a line in the first place.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Will the hon. member say anything about the districts to be served?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; I think enough has already been said about the districts during the debate by hon. gentlemen who have apparently got their information from some occult source which is not available to myself. If I wish to touch on all the subjects mentioned during the debate, I must touch on them lightly. I wish to make a few remarks on electoral affairs in this State. In the first place, I should like to state that I have heard in this House, and outside, a great many complaints about the state of the rolls for another place during the last elections. We had two evils presented to us during the last two elections. During the first election we had rolls that were unduly inflated to the highest possible degree, and during the last election we had rolls that were cut down perhaps beyond what they should have been. Certain persons—I am sorry to say I think a great many persons—undoubtedly were disfranchised. If I have to make my choice of these two evils, I would undoubtedly say that, so far as the necessity of an election goes and the prevention of methods that should not be used during an election, the latter case is far preferable to the former. I would sooner have a roll cut down too much than a roll that is unduly inflated. In this connection, allow me to say that the Electoral Department does not to any extent receive that sympathy and that assistance from the public which I think it has a right to expect. I do not think the wit of man can devise any automatic method of registration on the rolls which can be applicable and successful. We cannot have satisfactory rolls unless we have the assistance of the public; and the public of Western Australia, principally because they do not think about it, not only do not help the electoral authorities in making the rolls as perfect as possible, but absolutely hamper them. This is more noticeable in places such as Perth,

Kalgoorlie, and Fremantle, where you get several populous electorates adjoining one another and divided only by imaginary lines. I should like members to think for a moment about the heavy floating population we have in these cities; not a population that floats out of the cities, but one that floats from one part of a city to another. I should like hon. members to consider for a moment the immense number of people living in boarding-houses in Western Australia. If we take Perth, five of the two-storied houses out of six we see are boarding-houses; and we know that the instincts of those who live in boarding-houses are migratory. One morning a gentleman comes down to breakfast and does not get what he may desire, so he gives his landlady notice, packs up his goods and leaves the boarding-house. Perhaps he only shifts across the street, though the shift may bring him into a different electorate. If that gentleman fulfilled his duty as a citizen to the Electoral Department, he would apply at once to be transferred from the roll of the electorate he lived in to the roll of the electorate he removes to. Does he do so? In the first place he never worries about the vote unless there is an election within measurable distance—and we never know when an election is coming on. But when an election comes within measurable distance, does he get on the proper roll by transfer? In nine cases out of ten, no. He simply leaves his name on the old roll and makes a claim as an elector to be put on the roll of his new district. This is extremely hard to deal with and difficult; and it is one of the ways in which the public of Western Australia do not help the electoral authorities. I think a great deal of the blame which is showered by the public and by members of Parliament upon the electoral authorities is due to the apathy and carelessness of the electors, rather than to any carelessness or dereliction of duty on the part of the electoral officers. I do not see how any means can be taken unless we introduce the system which is followed in several of the other States—and in my private capacity I am inclined to believe in the system of electoral rights for the Lower House. I do not think the difficulty can be overcome unless you are dealing with people whose interests are aroused and kept

burning, and who are satisfied to help themselves and the department that presides over this particular branch of the Government service. There is another matter about which I would like to make a few remarks. Of all the parts of the Electoral Act—I am sorry to have to say this about an Act which I helped to pass through this House—but of all the bad parts of the Electoral Act, the worst part is that relating to postal voting. This is unsatisfactory in the extreme, and a constant source of trouble to those appointed to take postal votes and to the Government who appoints them. Whatever amendment is made in the electoral law, an amendment undoubtedly will have to be made as to the system of postal voting, and it will have to differ very largely indeed from the system we have at the present time. A few remarks were made about the method of compiling the Council rolls, and the difficulties which arise where Council rolls are supposed to be made up from the ratepayers' rolls and lists of roads boards which adopt the unimproved capital value of land as their basis of taxation. Members will see the compilation of Council rolls from that source is impossible. The only way to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement is to adopt the method mentioned by Mr. Langsford, that of giving notice to the people whose names have been struck off and forwarding them claims, which, if they take sufficient interest in the matter, they will fill up and forward to the electoral officer. That is the best and most common-sense way of dealing with the question. It was a peculiar thing that when Mr. Drew was making the first portion of his speech, my mind ran over a speech which was delivered the day previously by the Leader of the Opposition in another place, and I thought of the familiar likeness there was in the two speeches. Mr. Drew blamed the Government for not having brought down at the earliest possible moment a Bill to alter the franchise of this Chamber. The alteration of the franchise was mentioned by the Premier in his policy speech, and that policy speech set out the policy of the Government for three years. Members will have an opportunity of dealing with the Legislative Council franchise before the Parliament closes. At this late hour of the financial year

the aim of the Government is to bring down measures which are non-contentious, or are not seriously contentious. I cannot by the wildest stretch of the imagination describe such a measure as that dealing with the Legislative Council franchise as a non-contentious measure. I do not think the Government at this time of the year would be justified in bringing down such a measure for the consideration of members. I listened with a great deal of interest—which was heightened because I know of the qualifications of the gentleman who was making the remarks—to the speech of Captain Laurie about the harbour of Fremantle, and the possibilities of harbour improvement, and I feel sure, having been the Minister controlling the Fremantle Harbour Trust when it was first initiated, indeed having been the Minister who initiated the Fremantle Harbour Trust, and having had much to do with Captain Laurie as chairman of that body, that I am justified in saying that the State owes a great deal to Captain Laurie for the administration of what has been the most successful body ever started in Western Australia. A great deal of the success is due to the efforts of that gentleman, who has been self-sacrificing. He has sacrificed his own private interests for the benefit of the State and the benefit of the Trust for which he has done so well and entertains, I may say, such an affection. The Government would be ungrateful not to lay the greatest weight on any observations which the hon. member makes, and his observations will have their proper weight when the time comes for the consideration of that matter. The only part of the hon. member's speech which I regretted was the announcement of his intention of retiring from the Harbour Trust with which he has been so long and favourably connected. I hope the hon. member will reconsider the decision which he has come to. A great deal has been said by goldfields members about the mining prospects of the State, and I am inclined to agree with members as to the tone which has been adopted by some eminent mining engineers who have been visiting the State lately being rather pessimistic; but at the same time the difficulty which Mr. McKenzie alluded to as to how to encourage prospectors has been in my

mind for many years past. It is a most peculiar thing, nevertheless a fact, that the breed of prospectors appears to be dying out in Western Australia. Under much more adverse conditions in every way as regards water supply and as regards legislation, some years ago, in 1892, 1893, and 1894 men were found ready to go out into the desert without any equipment borrowed from the Government, as it can be borrowed in some cases to-day. On their own initiative they were found ready and willing to go into the desert to open up the fields to which Western Australia owes so much. Now it seems very difficult to get anyone to go out. It is difficult to say what has become of these prospectors—some have died, others have drifted away to other lands, and others—very few, I am sorry to say, for the prospector as a rule does not make a fortune—have made fortunes and gone into other works, probably some have gone into agriculture. Strange to say whilst these people have gone, no one seems to have arisen to take their places. It is hard to know any direction in which the industry can be encouraged. I know the present Minister for Mines is considering the subject carefully, and I feel sure if any inducement can be held out to these men it will be. There have been a few remarks made about the project for the construction by private companies of the Port Hedland-Nullagine Railway. Some misconception appears to have arisen as to the terms and conditions and circumstances under which offers can be laid before the Government. In the *Government Gazette* of a certain date, not long ago, a set of conditions was published under which offers would be received by the Government, not for the construction of the line exactly, but for the consideration of Parliament, the said consideration of Parliament being a condition precedent before the offer is accepted. These conditions were drawn up as the combined effort of the Works Department, the Railway Department, and the Crown Law Department, so that I do not think members can find they will be very faulty as regards construction, running, or the legal aspect of the question. I think to-day is the last day on which these offers will be received. The *modus operandi* will be that the offers will be laid before Parliament for

that body to judge which, if any, shall be accepted. A good many remarks have been made about the finances of the State, and in view of the fact that the Colonial Treasurer will be making his Budget Speech, I hope at the end of next week, I do not think it is necessary for me to make anything beyond a few general remarks on the subject. First, as regards the Estimates, I agree with the contention raised by members, raised for years past by Mr. Sholl, that the Estimates should be on the table of the House for the guidance of members before the end of the financial year. But unfortunately, that is out of the question. The accounts of the State do not close until the 10th July, so that that comparison which is the basis after all of the Estimates for the coming year with the expenditure of the year gone by is not available until after that date.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: I never suggested that they should be on the table at the end of the financial year.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am with the hon. member in that contention. I do not admit that his intention was that we should receive the Estimates immediately the year closed, but undoubtedly I think a change may be possible when we have settled government. I remind members that not during 16 months only, but during the last four years the government cannot be described as settled; but if we have stable government, possessing the confidence of the country, which is not likely to be rudely shaken, with stable government of that kind I think the Estimates can be on the table early in August. Mr. Randell made a few remarks, characteristic remarks I may say, because he makes them at all events once a session, about the cessation of borrowing, and he instanced what appeared to be not a happy instance, that of America in this connection. That was proved by Mr. Patrick when he stated that America undoubtedly owed much of its prosperity to the fact that the railway systems, and not only that but other great works in America, have been built out of English capital. That is an undoubted fact. We are met with the question whether the progress of the country is more likely to be fostered by Government-owned or privately-owned

railways. I believe it is a well-known maxim that the railways in America make as large a profit as they can for themselves, and leave as small a margin for the producer as is compatible with the continued existence of the producer. There is eloquent testimony in the fact that producers in America of late years have been emigrating to Canada. People in hundreds of thousands have been crossing the border to go farming in Canada every year. That is eloquent testimony to the fact that privately-owned railways constructed by private people and run without restrictions are not a blessing but a curse to a community. I have but little more to say. The time is getting late, and I wish to draw my remarks to a close. I will conclude by again thanking members for the remarks which they have made about the result of the elections. I can assure the members that the Government realise that as it has been given to them so it will be demanded of them. This majority confers on the Government responsibilities which are gauged by the size of the majority. As the people have trusted us so we must return to the people. The Government are thankful indeed to the public for the confidence reposed in them. I think I am justified in saying, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, that it will be our utmost endeavour not to abuse the confidence which has been reposed in us, but to push forward this great State of ours with all the ability with which nature has endowed us. I beg to thank hon. members for the courtesy they have always extended to me. I had one session's experience of leading the House, a session when I had not the same favourable chance I have to-day, now that I have Mr. Moss with me, and on that occasion I had treatment from members here, more than fair treatment, generous treatment, for which I shall never feel that I am sufficiently grateful. If members treat me with half the courtesy and with half the generosity they did on that occasion, I shall be more than satisfied and deeply thankful.

THE PRESIDENT: Before putting the question, I have to thank hon. members for their congratulations on my again being able to resume my duties as President of the Council. Had it not been for the kindness of members in

granting me leave of absence and thus enabling me to obtain the best medical advice I could get, I should not be enjoying the health that I do at the present time. I thank members for the remarks which they have made during the course of the debate.

Question (that the Address-in-Reply be adopted) put and passed.

At 6-35, the PRESIDENT left the Chair.

At 7-40, Chair resumed.

BILL—ABORIGINES.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill): In moving the second reading of this Bill, which occupies a peculiar position amongst Bills, as this is the third occasion on which it has been discussed in this Chamber, I do not think that many or lengthy remarks will be required from me; because members will recollect that during the preceding session in this Chamber, when a similar Bill was introduced by the then leader of the House, the Hon. J. M. Drew, the Bill was referred to a select committee; and the Bill which we now have before us embodies as nearly as possible, with some few additions which I shall have pleasure in explaining, the result of the cogitations of that select committee. After returning from the select committee, it went through the House without amendment and practically without question or discussion; so that as to the portions of the Bill which are the same as those which passed the House last session, I do not think that any remarks of mine are necessary. Dealing, therefore, with the clauses specifically, the first alteration is that the clauses referring to accounts, which were Clauses 8 and 9 of the original Bill, have now been transferred to a later portion of the measure, and appear in Clause 64, which clause was drafted after consultation with the Audit Department, and with a strict and careful eye to the requirements of that department. Before dealing with the first clause wherein an alteration occurs, I may be allowed to say a few words about Clause 18, in connection with which members will notice that I have an amendment on the Notice Paper to add certain para-

graphs; because it has been pointed out to the Government by Mr. Sholl that, in cases where permits to employ natives are held by the employee of an individual or of a corporate body, as is often the case in the Northern districts where stations are owned by individuals or corporate bodies whose places of business or residences are some distance from the station, those owners might be subject to considerable inconvenience by either the death of the holder of such permit or by his leaving the service of the owner. It has therefore been found necessary, acting on representations which Mr. Sholl and others have made, that these amendments shall be inserted. One paragraph is:—

Provided that, on the death of a holder of a permit, the permit shall continue in force for three months thereafter, and shall be deemed to have been granted to his legal personal representative.

That deals with the case where trouble might arise through death. The second proviso deals with another difficulty that might arise through the employee leaving the service of the owner, and it reads:—

Provided also that, whenever a permit shall be granted to any person being the agent of any other person, and the agency shall determine, the permit shall continue in force for three months thereafter, and shall be deemed to be granted to the principal.

I think this amendment will meet and overcome the difficulty which has been raised, and that these paragraphs will be very workable additions to the Bill; and I thank the hon. member for suggesting them. As to Clause 25, members who have compared the two Bills—the one before the House last session and the one we are now considering—will notice that after the words “any aboriginal who” the words “without reasonable cause” are inserted, and the clause now reads, “Any aboriginal who without reasonable cause shall neglect or refuse to enter upon or commence his service, or shall absent himself from his service, or shall refuse or neglect to work in the capacity in which he has been engaged, or shall desert or quit his work without the consent of his employer,” etcetera. This does not affect the meaning of the clause, and puts it, I think, in a plainer and fairer manner. In Clause 34 and onward where

the word "justice" means "justice of the peace" it is supplemented by the addition of the words "of the peace." This may be called a clerical amendment. Now I will come to Clauses 47, 48, 49, 50, and 51; and here I would draw attention to the fact that a new principle is introduced in the Bill which deals with the possession of and delivery to natives of firearms. Clause 47 makes it necessary for a native who carries firearms to hold a license. This, I think, is in view of the fatalities which sometimes occur through the fact of natives getting possession of firearms, the victims of which are sometimes other natives and sometimes white men. It has been thought necessary and advisable to add these clauses which deal with the possession of firearms by these natives. Clause 48 deals with the fact that these licenses, which may be issued or withheld, must, when issued, be produced on demand. Clause 49 places in detectives' and police officers' hands the power to "take from any aboriginal any gun found in his possession, if such aboriginal shall not, on demand, produce a license duly granted to him and in force to carry such gun." Clause 50 is an important clause, because it deals with the prohibition of sale or delivery of guns to unlicensed aboriginals. The clause provides:—

It shall be unlawful to sell or deliver a gun to any aboriginal unless at the time of the sale or delivery such aboriginal has in force a license granted to him by a protector permitting such aboriginal to carry a gun.

This has also been found advisable, because some little time back, on one of our Northern fields, a habit prevailed which gave rise to a great deal of complaint, from the fact that natives employed in that locality had firearms in their possession. While I do not think that any casualty really occurred, still the presence of these natives armed as they were was a dangerous menace to the community, and gave rise to a great deal of misgiving. Clause 51 provides that the onus of proof of the possession of a license shall rest upon the native, that is, that the native shall be supposed, until he produces his license, not to have one. There is no farther amendment except a verbal amendment in Clause 56 until we get to Clause 59. Members will recollect that one of the

grounds of complaint against the method of dealing in our courts with natives was the fact that when a native was put on his trial it was said that as a rule he was not given an opportunity of putting up any defence; that sometimes it was possible he did not understand the charge brought against him. And indeed those who observe the demeanour of natives in courts of law will think that possibly there may be something in this contention. The second part of Clause 59 provides that—

At the hearing of any prosecution under this Act against an aboriginal the justices may permit any person to address them, and examine and cross-examine witnesses, on behalf of such aboriginal.

That is, if there is any vestige of doubt in the mind of the justice as to whether the native on his trial does not understand the serious consequences which upon his being found guilty may fall upon him, he can ask some person—of course using his discretion—to act really as an advocate for the native, to examine and cross-examine witnesses on behalf of such aboriginal. I should point out to members that it is not within the province of any bystander to interrupt the proceedings of a court of law where a native is being tried, and demand to be admitted as an advocate for that native, but it devolves upon the justice trying the case to request some person to act on that behalf and in that capacity for the aboriginal. I do not think that any objection should be taken to this clause. The next new clause, or the next reconstructed clause—because although it is reconstructed it embodies really the same effect as was provided in Clauses 8 and 9 of last session's Bill—is Clause 64, which deals with the accounts and audit, and, as I have said, it has been prepared after careful consideration of the circumstances with the Audit Department. The next new part of the Bill is Clause 65. I am very glad to have the assistance of my friend Mr. Moss, who will explain more fully to members the provisions of this clause, which has been suggested by the Colonial Office. Two errors occurred in 1894 and 1897 in the administration of the department over which I now preside. I do not know that anything more is necessary from me to explain the position of this

Bill. I shall have much pleasure in going into the matter in Committee; but with these remarks, and with the assurance that Mr. Moss will fully explain what is, after all, a purely legal question with regard to Clause 65, I have pleasure in moving that the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. M. L. MOSS (Honorary Minister): I have a carefully prepared statement to make with regard to Clause 65, and I make it because some amount of correspondence has passed between persons in this State and the Colonial Office, and we want to make it perfectly clear. It will be noticed that there is a different procedure adopted from what is usually the case, because the enacting part is preceded by two recitals, which will briefly explain what I am putting before the House. By Section 70 of the Constitution Act of 1889, that is the original Constitution Act which gave us responsible government, it was provided that there should be paid to Her Majesty out of the consolidated revenue £5,000, to be appropriated to the welfare of the aboriginal natives, and that such sum should be issued to the Aborigines Protection Board created under the statute, and might be expended by the board at their discretion, under the sole control of the Governor. It was farther provided that when the gross revenue of the State exceeded £500,000 in any financial year that amount should be supplemented to an extent which would make the total sum provided one per cent. of the gross revenue of the State. Between the time responsible government was granted and 1894 the country made great strides, and the revenue of the country increased to such an extent that this one per cent. of the gross revenue would have given an amount that was far in excess of what was required to provide for all aboriginal natives. So on the 19th November, 1894, Parliament passed a Bill whereby this Section 70 of the Constitution Act 1889 was repealed, and provision was then made for providing the funds necessary for the relief and to assist generally to promote the well-being of the aborigines. The Bill was of course, being an amendment of the Constitution Act, reserved for the signification of the Sovereign's pleasure. On the 10th July, 1897, a cablegram was

received from the Agent General in these words:—

Premier has been informed by Secretary of State that Bill abolishing 70 Section of Constitution Act with reference to Aborigines will at once receive Royal assent.

On the 11th July, 1897, a cablegram was received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies in these words:—

I have fully discussed with the Premier question of Aborigines Board and have agreed to assent to Bill.

On the 10th September, 1897, a despatch dated 6th August, 1897, was received by the Governor from the Secretary of State for the Colonies stating that in the course of submitting the Bill for the assent of the Queen-in-Council attention had been drawn to a point that had been unfortunately overlooked and that by Section 33 of 5 and 6 Vic., No. 76, the Bill had lapsed. This was a measure passed by the Imperial Parliament prescribing amongst other things the method whereby a statute was reserved for the signification of the Sovereign's assent. It was originally passed as applicable to the Colony of New South Wales; but when constitutional Government was given to West Australia it was provided that the provision of this Statute regarding the procedure necessary in regard to Bills reserved for the signification of the Sovereign's pleasure should continue to apply to Western Australia. Under this statute it became necessary that the Sovereign's assent should be signified within two years from the day on which the measure was presented to the Governor. The Secretary of State informed Sir John Forrest, the then Premier, and his Ministry that the Sovereign's assent was not obtained within two years, and that it became necessary to pass a new measure. This was not discovered until September, 1897; and it became necessary then to pass a new Bill to carry out what the State Parliament had passed in 1894. Therefore provision was made for another Bill, which was passed providing for a sum of £5,000 per annum or such additional sum as the Parliament of Western Australia might from time to time vote for the purpose of the aboriginal natives. One might have thought that after the bungle made by the Imperial authorities in 1894 some care would be taken on the measure of

1897 to see that the formalities of the law were properly complied with; but it turns out that again there was failure to comply with the provisions of the Imperial statute, because when the Bill was passed a second time and received the assent of the Sovereign in due course, they proclaimed the Act in West Australia instead of proclaiming the Order of the Sovereign-in-Council which gave assent to the measure. To make this clear to the House, the Royal Assent was given to this Bill at a Court held at Osborne House on the 3rd of February, 1898; and then in due course the Order-in-Council of the Queen's Court at Osborne House should have been proclaimed in this State. What apparently was done was this. The Bill came out properly assented to, and the then Premier, or some other person, I do not know on whom the responsibility would rest, sent to the *Government Gazette* an intimation that the Act had received Royal Assent, when, according to the old Imperial Act, what they should have done was to have proclaimed in the State that the Order-in-Council had been issued by the Sovereign giving the signification of Her Majesty's assent to the Bill. The whole thing has been carefully and critically explained to the Imperial authorities, and there is no doubt that when this measure passes both Houses of Parliament there will be an immediate assent given by the Sovereign to Clause 65, which hon. members will observe says:—

The Act and parts of Acts mentioned in the First Schedule shall be deemed to have been repealed, the Aborigines Protection Board shall be deemed to have been abolished, and the Aborigines Department shall be deemed to have been lawfully established on and from the (said) date, and all Acts . . . and things done . . . validated.

In other words, it will be retrospective in its operation, and will validate the existence of the department and all acts and things done under these laws in the assumption that they had been correctly passed and were the law of the land. Persons who have interested themselves in this matter have taken up the attitude that the State Government have been unfair so far as the aborigines are concerned, and that we have not acted justly by them. In order to put on record and

to explain to the House exactly the position the respective Governments have assumed since 1892 with reference to the aborigines, I have here a short statement whereby the House will be immediately put in possession of the liberality which this country has shown towards the aborigines. The sums annually appropriated by Parliament for the expenditure on the aborigines since 1892 have been as follow: 1892, £5,154; 1893, £6,792; 1894, £6,890; 1895, £7,111; 1896, £7,579; 1897, £16,956; 1898, £9,578; 1899, £10,343; 1900, £9,802; 1901, £10,300; 1902, £10,713; 1903, £11,519; 1904, £12,995; 1905, £14,000. I think the country has evinced great liberality indeed towards the aborigines. There can be no truth in the statement or suggestion that the aborigines have been unfairly treated. If Clause 65 passes into law, it will validate all that has been done. I think the figures demonstrate that the country has acted very fairly towards the natives. Since this Government has come into office attempts have been made to get considerable information respecting this matter from my department, and I have refused to give it to the public because I thought it was a duty I owed to the House and the Government to make this explanation here. That is also why the recitals appear in Clause 65, so that there will be no possible doubt but that the clause is being passed to make this Act retrospective, and to validate what has gone on for a number of years apparently illegally.

HON. R. F. SHOLL (North): This Bill has been debated on previous occasions, so that I think there is very little to say regarding it now. It is a desirable Bill, which will protect the natives without unduly interfering with the employers. There is danger in regard to administration if the power which is given to the protector is used harshly towards the employers, for it will tend to create a position which will be untenable and unbearable and not to the advantage of employer or employee. I am glad to see that the Colonial Secretary proposes an amendment to one clause, because it will be giving some protection to the station owner far removed from the coast. The manager of a station may have a permit to employ natives, but under the Bill as it stands, in the case

of the death of the manager, or in the case of his leaving the owner's employ, the situation would be created that the station would be deprived of labour necessary to carry it on. The proposed amendment will enable the permit to be transferred, but as the Bill stands no one under a penalty could employ the natives in the case of the removal of the manager, and until another permit was obtained all the means of carrying on the station would be unavailable and unobtainable. There are some little amendments I am going to suggest of a trifling character. I notice that a justice of the peace may order natives out of a town. That is correct, but the justice is precluded from going on to any reserve. I think that is a mistake, and I propose to move an amendment to remedy that particular clause. Then again, in regard to Clause 60, giving power to make regulations, I suggest that any regulations laid on the table of the House should be liable to be disallowed by either House of Parliament. Some particular matter might be placed in the regulations which if placed in the body of the Bill would not receive the consent of both Houses. For instance, Subclause *h* of Clause 60 regulates the payment of wages under agreement. With this idea of a white Australia the time may come when we may have a Ministry in power that may prefer the country to keep the aboriginal population in idleness, and may insist that all these sheep stations be worked by white labour only; and they may insist on such a remuneration as £3 or £4 a month. In such case, of course such a Ministry would always have a majority in another Chamber to carry what it wished. Therefore I suggest that this subclause be struck out, or that the words "both Houses" be struck out and the words "Such regulations may be disallowed by either House of Parliament" be inserted instead. Otherwise I think the Bill is an excellent one; and though I do not think it is likely such a contingency should arise, yet one has to provide against possibilities, and there is nothing like being on the safe side.

HON. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): In regard to the provision as to aborigines being possessed of firearms, I think it very good indeed; but there should be some regulation to prevent licenses being

granted too readily to the natives. I also suggest that instead of the usual paper licenses each license could be printed on metal so that it should be affixed to the rifle, for natives have no means of carrying a piece of paper about with them. The natives of the present day do not possess what the old natives used to have. I have seen a native put his pipe through a hole in his nose, but the present native is too civilised to have a hole in his nose to put his license in, therefore we should give him a license on something different from paper. When once a native becomes used to firearms he rarely loses a shot, he brings down everything he aims at. I think some provision should be made whereby a record should be kept of the deaths of unemployed natives. I know that they die in our district, and if one asks another native what has become of a certain man he will tell you that he is dead. There may have been some foul play, therefore I think a record should be kept and an inquiry held if necessary. It should be the duty of the protector of aborigines to keep a record of the deaths in settled districts, for these men are human beings after all; they are an unfortunate race, but they have many characteristics which are very interesting. We should be very sorry if the race should die out. Natives ought not to be allowed to disappear without knowing what has happened to them. It is very simple for one native to get rid of another by foul play. We know the names of these men, and there would be no trouble in keeping a record.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Most of them are known to the police.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Most of them are known to the public, if they are not known to the police. In the past, half-castes have been permitted to go into hotels just the same as white men; therefore I am glad to see the provision in the Bill in reference to half-castes. I trust that the Bill will be passed in its present form and carried out to the strict letter. In regard to Clause 23, which demands the duplicate of an agreement to be sent to the Protector, I trust that very great discretion will be used in this matter. I know of two half-castes who are successful farmers in my district; they have been there for a number of years and are deserving men. They have married

half-caste women, and such men should not be subjected to the operation of this Bill. They are paying taxes, and one man particularly has been the holder of a nice property for 15 years. This is an exceptional case, and it would be an insult to bring such a man under the operation of this Bill. I think this measure will go a long way towards doing away with a great deal that has been said as to our treatment of the natives, and in regard to not being too liberal with them as far as money is concerned. We have not been niggardly; if the money has not been properly applied, that is the fault of administration. This Bill will be welcomed by all who have the interests of this unfortunate race at heart. It is a pity that the natives are dying out, and I am sorry that something cannot be done with them. I have had natives under my observation for 40 years, and I know it is hopeless to do anything with them. All we can do is to protect them as far as possible and leave nature to do the rest. It is a case of the survival of the fittest, but let the fittest do their best.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West): I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading. This is a subject in which I have taken a great deal of interest. I have known of a large number of natives on stations in the North for a number of years, and I know that the owners of stations always have had the most friendly feelings towards the natives, they recognise that there is a great deal of useful service rendered by them. I was rather afraid that after all that has been said on the question, probably a very drastic Bill would be brought forward; therefore I congratulate the Government on this measure, because it gives ample protection to the aborigines and does not press unduly on the squatters. I think the idea of having reserves near townships an excellent one. I do not believe in large reserves; there is no necessity for them. It is mentioned in Clause 10 that the Government may make a reserve of 2,000 acres; but the clause is only permissible, and it is not likely that any such large area will be proclaimed a reserve. I understand it will be an offence for people to go on to these reserves to take drink to the natives.

That is an all-wise provision. I am pleased with the provision as to the licensing of guns. It is a dangerous practice indeed to allow natives who are not properly civilised to carry firearms. In West Kimberley district desperate natives have come into possession of rifles. I know of one case where a native became a terror to the whole place, no man's life being safe. This native shot a number of men. I remember distinctly the names of three men who were shot, and one settler had his hand shot off. No man's life was safe. This native would pick white men off like shooting pigeons down, and he never lost an opportunity of shooting a white man who was within his reach. Firearms should be restricted. I think the Bill a moderate one, and one that will meet with the approval of the people in the northern parts of the State as well as in the southern portion. I see very little in the Bill to take exception to.

HON. E. M. CLARKE (South-West): Mr. McLarty has mentioned the subject of preventing natives having firearms: at the same time he admits that the native who held up people in the North was a police native who had turned traitor, released all the prisoners, and was a terror to the neighbourhood. These natives might be employed, but they should not be placed in possession of firearms.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): There is very little reason for the outcry against the treatment of natives in this State. We know that natives are very good at inventing stories: civilised natives will tell fairy tales with any white man, especially if he can get an attentive hearing. If the *Sunday Times* or any newspaper got hold of a native and treated him well, then that paper could get good stories out of him. I know many instances where natives have told most outrageous stories, but when these have been inquired into there was not a word of truth in them. In one instance a native declared that a boy had been murdered, but that boy was found alive and well. Natives spread stories of this description, and it is unwise for people to believe them. There is great necessity for this Bill, and I think it a very moderate one. I think in the officer who has charge of the natives

the State has an officer who has the interest of the aborigines at heart. I am sure he has done everything in his power for the welfare and comfort of the natives throughout the State. I have on several occasions seen him put his hand in his pocket and fork out a shilling here and a sixpence there to any native who asked him for alms. They all know that they have only to ask him in order to receive. I am sure the Bill has been thoroughly considered by the protector, and that it is his earnest desire to have it passed, with one or two amendments. One he has mentioned is with respect to the areas to be reserved for the natives' use. He considers that more than one reserve should be allowed in each district. In my opinion we cannot make the natives better than they are; we cannot improve their position. We can provide only for those who are wholly helpless, either from age or infirmity. The only means of keeping rovers from strolling into mischief is to provide them with constant employment and treat them properly. This is fully recognised by all station proprietors. If you treat a native well, he will stay with you; if not, he will not stay. I think that some difficulty will be experienced in keeping the natives on the reserves, because a native does not consider it nice to stay too long in one locality, nor do I think it will ever be found possible to get natives to live in a house for more than a few weeks. They like continual change. They have no idea of looking out for the future. They are thoroughly improvident; and with them "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." They are, in fact, very philosophical. I think they must be something like old Diogenes, who was satisfied to live in a tub. The natives are perfectly satisfied to live in a hut of their own construction; and when it is worn out they build another farther on. Drink makes the condition of the natives much worse than it need be. Once they acquire the taste for spirits, there is no help for them. Curiously enough, they always find white people ready to supply them with drink, no matter in what part of the State they may be. However, the Bill seeks to prevent by every possible means their obtaining drink. They will be compelled to keep within the reserves, and whites likely to

supply them with spirits will be looked on and punished as trespassers. I am pleased with the Bill so far as I have been able to study it, and I think it will give general satisfaction.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

HON. H. BRIGGS in the Chair; the COLONIAL SECRETARY in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Reserves:

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD: No doubt 2,000 acres was more than sufficient near a town; but were not some of the reserves in the far North to be used for hunting purposes, other lands having been alienated? That was the recommendation of the select committee. For hunting purposes a reserve of 2,000 acres, only twice the size of King's Park, would be altogether insufficient.

HON. E. M. CLARKE: It was almost useless to give natives reserves for hunting purposes; as well give them the whole country. To confine a native to a reserve was impracticable. If natives were sent to a reserve a hundred miles distant from their usual haunts, murder would result from the mixture of tribes. The Governor had power to declare various small reserves. That would meet the case by keeping troublesome natives out of the towns. The clause should be amended to give power to declare more than one reserve in a given magisterial district, so that different tribes of natives could be ordered on to separate reserves in the country where they had been brought up.

HON. C. A. PIESSE moved an amendment—

That the words "in any one magisterial district," in lines 2 and 3, be struck out.

The amendment would enable a dozen reserves to be declared in any magisterial district. These districts were hundreds of miles in area. To say that the aggregate reserves should not exceed 2,000 acres was ridiculous.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In the opinion of himself and Mr. Moss, the clause would not prevent the declaration of several reserves in one magisterial district. The report of the select committee, which the House adopted unanimously

last session, stated that it was proposed to limit the proclamation of reserves to Crown lands, including pastoral leases and town commons, and farther to limit the size of such reserves to an area of 2,000 acres in each district; that any scheme proposing to bring together in large areas natives of different tribes was foredoomed to failure, owing to tribal feuds and disagreements, which must be settled by violence; that the method of keeping natives on reserves was not economical; that while the reserve system had been successful with more highly civilised races, such as the North American Indians, there was no hope that our aborigines could be brought to observe rules and regulations in confined areas; but it was thought that areas should be reserved for unemployed natives, adjacent to the towns which they were in the habit of frequenting, to make it easier to keep them as free as possible from the malignant influence of depraved whites, and to provide them with recognised camping grounds. The purpose of these reserves was to place within the reach of these natives, more especially in the vicinity of towns where natives became a nuisance to themselves and to the dwellers of those towns, pieces of country which they could call their own for the purpose of camping there. Hunting grounds in the districts to which he was alluding would be those parts of leases in which the department practically never debarred them from hunting. As to these reserves, 2,000 acres would be a preposterous area for a camping ground. A square mile would be ample, or 500 acres would be a very liberal allowance. Taking 500 acres, it would be possible within a large magisterial district to have four of these reserves in the vicinity of a town. Personally, he did not recognise the necessity of having these reserves except in the vicinity of towns. We must have some place to which we could deport those natives who were becoming a nuisance in the town and contracting bad habits. Furthermore, we should have some place in regard to which the presence of any white man, not being an authorised person—and the authorised persons were few in number—would be an offence and punishable under law. That perhaps was a more important object than the placing of the natives on reserves. He was perfectly willing to accept some slight amend-

ment. If the hon. member liked to move to increase the area from 2,000 acres to 3,000, he would be prepared to accept that. That would practically enable there to be five of these reserves on a square mile. Members talked about the immense size of the magisterial districts in the North. He had travelled about most of them, and knew that the opportunity of placing reserves close to towns or even hamlets in those northern magisterial areas was very small indeed. In the magisterial district of East Kimberley there was one town, and in West Kimberley, Broome and Derby. The only places where the natives were brought into evil contact with the whites were in the vicinity of towns. The select committee was composed of gentlemen all of whom, he thought, had some considerable experience of natives, and the proposal was endorsed unanimously.

HON. C. A. PIESSE wished to withdraw his amendment. The clause said, "an area of two thousand acres." It did not say a total area. "An area" meant one. [HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: It meant the total area.] It did not.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, in order to set at rest any flickering doubts in the mind of the Hon. C. A. Piesse, and at the suggestion of the Hon. M. L. Moss, an amendment that after "lands," the words "to be a reserve for aborigines" be inserted, and that the same words after "acres" be struck out.

THE HON. J. W. LANGSFORD suggested that "three" should be struck out and "two" inserted.

The CHAIRMAN mentioned that this portion of the clause had been passed, but that it could be dealt with on recommendation.

Amendment—the Colonial Secretary's—put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Aborigines may be removed to reserves:

HON. G. RANDELL: All districts were not alike, and circumstances might arise in which it would be very injudicious to remove an unemployed native from a station to a reserve. At DeGrey a native might not be employed on a station, or only for a short time occasionally, and he lived among his friends,

being assisted by the station or by those friends. His home and relations were there, and circumstances pointed to its being undesirable for him to be removed to a reserve.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It could only be done by the order of the Minister.

HON. G. RANDELL: All the circumstances would have to be set forth. The station owners were quite willing to keep this man, and they often did so, and treated him kindly. Sometimes natives were debarred from eating mutton or beef or from drinking milk. For three-quarters of the year they lived on food they prepared for themselves, during a period of mourning; showing that there were religious customs even among the natives.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This clause was not supposed to have much connection with the North, and he did not think it would ever be used there. The Protector of Aborigines, in dealing with certain natives on the Welshpool aboriginal reserve, found himself to be in rather a peculiar position in regard to that reserve. One of the natives looked upon it as a home; he was what might be described as a bush lawyer amongst the natives, and thought that if he got there he could not be shifted. To deal with that question, this clause was inserted. He (the Minister) did not think the word "Minister" would appear, if the clause were supposed to apply to the North. It was so evidently for southern use, that the Minister, who lived in the South, whose services were available, was the person whose authority must be obtained for the purpose of putting the clause into operation.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 13—Exceptions:

HON. E. M. CLARKE moved an amendment to strike out Subclause (b.) ("Who is the holder of a permit to be absent from a reserve.") It should not be necessary for an aborigine to carry a permit about with him.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY hoped the subclause would not be struck out. When a native, to the knowledge of the police and inspectors, had been put on a reserve and kept there and then released from the reserve, it was surely necessary that the police should know that the native had obtained his release,

and that there should be documentary evidence of it.

HON. E. M. CLARKE: This seemed to be treating the native like a released convict. We should let the natives be as free as possible, so long as they behaved well. His desire was to make their lives as easy as possible.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

HON. C. A. PIESSE moved an amendment to add to Subclause (b) the words, "on which he has been previously confined."

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: It was not to be expected that the Protector would act arbitrarily. The authorities would do their best for the natives. To quibble over these clauses was only to delay the passage of the Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was no necessity for the addition of the words. The clause was taken from the Queensland Act, and it was well-known the drafting was perfect.

HON. M. L. MOSS: In order to get a permit, the native must have been placed on a reserve.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14—Persons who are prohibited from entering a reserve:

HON. R. F. SHOLL suggested that provision should be made for allowing a justice of the peace to enter a reserve.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The superintendent actually occupied a higher position in relation to the natives than a justice of the peace; and if a justice of the peace had any business to transact on a reserve he could obtain permission from the superintendent.

Clause passed.

Clauses 15, 16, 17—agreed to.

Clause 18—Form and duration of permit:

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, two paragraphs were added:—

Provided that, on the death of a holder of a permit, the permit shall continue in force for four months thereafter, and shall be deemed to have been granted to his legal personal representative.

Provided also that, whenever a permit shall be granted to any person being the agent of any other person, and the agency shall determine, the permit shall continue in force for four months thereafter, and shall be deemed to be granted to the principal.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 19 to 31—agreed to.

Clause 32—Death of employed aborigines:

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Some provision should be made for a record being kept of the deaths of aborigines not employed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This matter was not being lost sight of. The police were supposed to inform themselves to the best of their ability of the death of all persons, white or black, employed or unemployed. Such a provision as suggested should have a place in the Bill. The duty came under the registrar of births, deaths, and marriages.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: The explanation was not satisfactory. Aborigines died in the district he represented and no records were kept. The request was a reasonable one.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 33 to 59—agreed to.

Clause 60—Regulations:

HON. R. F. SHOLL moved an amendment:

That in subsection (h) the words "and amount" be struck out.

Amendment passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 61 to 66—agreed to.

Schedules, Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

BILL—STATUTES COMPILATION.

SECOND READING.

HON. M. L. MOSS (Honorary Minister): I rise to move the second reading of this small but very important measure; one that I do not anticipate there will be the slightest objection to in this House or another place, and one which will enable the Government to proceed, during recess, with the work of compiling the Statutes, and thereby carrying out the work of consolidation which, if I may be permitted to express an opinion, will be a far better method under the terms of the Bill of carrying out a desirable work than is done before the House. This measure is copied from two statutes passed in New Zealand, the first in 1902 and the second in 1905; and in order that I may give the House some idea of the necessity which exists for the consolidation of a number of Acts now on our

statute-book, I have taken eight subjects dealt with in the index to the last volumes of the statutes for 1904, to prove how necessary is the proposed compilation, in the interests of those persons concerned in the administration of justice, and more particularly in the administration of justice in the outlying parts of this State, where the difficulty of knowing exactly what is the statute law on any particular subject is tremendously intensified by the difficulty of finding every amendment dealing with each measure to which reference must be made. Prior to 1895, the whole of the statutes of this State were arranged in alphabetical order under different headings. All the statutes relating to the law of evidence, all relating to company law, all relating to banking, were found under the headings to which the principal Acts and their amendments referred. But in 1895, when the last reprint of the statutes was made under the supervision of the late Mr. J. C. H. James, the Acts of Parliament were put in chronological order instead of being grouped under headings; and the difficulty that experts experience in endeavouring to collect the whole of the statutes bearing on one subject is very considerable. But when I consider the difficulty that must be experienced in the country districts of this State by those charged with the important duty of carrying out the law, I am perfectly satisfied that in a large number of instances it is impossible for them to find out exactly where they are. New Zealand was confronted with much the same difficulty as we in this State experience. I propose presently to show the position we are in with regard to eight subjects taken from the index to the statutes. In New Zealand it is provided that both Houses of Parliament may by resolution direct the Attorney General to compile all the amendments and the principal Act relating to any particular subject, not making any amendments, but showing as in one measure the law as laid down in the principal Act and the amendments thereto, and to add to such compilation an appendix showing the Acts and sections of Acts comprised therein. In preparing this compilation the Attorney General is authorised to make such consequential and other alterations in, additions to, or omissions

from the text as in his opinion are necessary in order to give effect to implied repeals, to secure uniformity of expression, and generally to allow of the compilation being enacted as an Act of the year of enactment; and he shall indorse upon such compilation or attach thereto a memorandum directing attention to every such alteration, addition, or omission, and stating where necessary the reason thereof. The compilation is then printed, bound up with the next volume of the Statutes passed by law; and it is the duty of the Attorney General to forward to the Clerk of Parliaments a copy of the compiled measure; and the clerk's duty is to forward a copy to the Speaker of the Lower House and the President of the Upper House, such copies to be laid on the table at the commencement of the next ensuing session of Parliament. In New Zealand, until the year 1902, that was the extent of the amendment. The compiled statutes were bound up with the next volume of statutes issued, and the compilations were in existence, not as the law of the land, but merely for the purpose of reference. But we propose in Clause 4, comprising the law as enacted by the amending New Zealand Act of 1905, that the compiled measure may thereafter be enacted in the method set out in the Clause:—

A list of Acts and parts of Acts comprised in the compilation shall be set out in an Appendix A. to the enacting statute, and the full text of the compilation shall be set out as an Appendix B. thereto.

The enacting statute shall set forth that the Acts and parts of Acts set forth in Appendix A. are hereby repealed, and that the compiled Act set forth in Appendix B. is thereby enacted (under its particular title).

There is a provision enabling any alterations, additions, or omissions made as provided by Clause 2 of this Bill to be amended, altered, rejected, or restored; and the compiled statute then becomes the law of the land. As an illustration of the necessity for a measure of this kind, to put various statutes on something like a reasonable basis so that people may understand them, let me point out that with regard to the Agricultural Bank there are six Acts in force, covering a period ranging from 1894 to 1904. Regarding agricultural lands purchase there are five statutes in force, covering a period from 1896 to 1904. Of

statutes relating to banks and banking there are 12, ranging from as far back as 1837 to 1904. Our company law is comprised in 12 statutes, from 1892 to 1904. The law of evidence—on this I put great emphasis, because these are statutes to which justices all over the State are continually obliged to refer—is comprised in no less than 34 Acts of Parliament, ranging from 1839 to 1890. It is in my opinion highly desirable that an important branch of law with which justices throughout the State must be thoroughly conversant, should be embraced in one statute easy of reference. The licensing law is comprised in 18 measures, ranging from 1880 to 1904. The law of real property—another highly important subject—is contained in 37 statutes, dating from 1832 to 1902. Statutes relating to the Supreme Court and its procedure number 11, from 1836 to 1903. The policy of the present Government is a policy of administration; and in the administration of the Government departments it becomes necessary to have something like a reasonable compilation of these Acts of Parliament. In my opinion it would be useless to ask Parliament to reprint our statutes in reasonable bulk, taking out amendments, if in that reprint we had to incorporate 34 different Acts of Parliament relating to the law of evidence and 37 relating to the law of real property. I recognise that the proposed work cannot be done in one session. The work will necessarily have to be spread over a period of perhaps five or six years. It can be done only in homœopathic doses; and it can be done only in pursuance of a direct resolution of both Houses of Parliament. But I recognise that if this compilation can be made without heavy cost, and if the work be spread over a period of years, we shall get the whole of our statute law embraced in a reasonable edition, and shall have the whole of the subjects grouped under headings, instead of in chronological order as they are now. In my opinion, in copying the measure which has been in operation in New Zealand in its complete form since the end of the last session of the New Zealand Parliament, we shall be doing a good work. I am sorry I have not with me the New Zealand Act; but I will bring it to the

House for the inspection of members. The first measure of the New Zealand Parliament, carried out under this scheme, is a compilation of all the New Zealand laws relating to coal-mining. In my opinion, from a perusal I have made of that measure, I am perfectly certain that those charged with the administration of that important industry in New Zealand will find great benefit from the whole of the laws on that subject being embraced in one statute, the compilation being made, not on the floor of Parliament but under the direction of Parliament, and subject always to parliamentary approval, with the safeguards set forth in Clause 4 of this Bill. In New Zealand that important work of consolidation has gone on at very little cost to the State, and as far as I can see, with great benefit to the country at large. I strongly recommend to the House the acceptance of this small measure. I believe that, bound up as it is with the work of administering the departments of this State, it must be of the greatest benefit.

HON. G. RANDELL: How will you deal with future amendments?

HON. M. L. MOSS: I presume the hon. member is alluding to amendments which may be made at dates subsequent to the compilation. In this State we have adopted a procedure which will be found in the Justices Act, the Criminal Code, the Electoral Act, and a number of more recent statutes. The Government Printer, in printing subsequent copies of any statute that has been amended, is entitled to embody the amendments; and in the amendments we have passed we have put corresponding numbers against the clauses, so that when printed subsequently with the principal Act, the amending Acts and the principal Act will appear as one statute. That will meet the case; and the plan has been carried out in a number of instances. If members will look at the amendments hitherto made in the Criminal Code, they will find that with the idea of preventing the need for reprinting that large statute we have taken the precaution to avoid the necessity for formal consolidation. The work of consolidation goes on automatically with the work of amendment. We shall not find the good effect of this immediately; but I am convinced that

as time goes on, perhaps five or six years hence, it will be very beneficial, and of great assistance to those charged with the administration of justice.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9-33 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 30th November, 1905.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 2-30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—ENTOMOLOGIST'S SALARY AND EXPENSES.

MR. A. A. HORAN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What is Mr. Compère's annual salary as Government Entomologist? 2, What has the Government paid this gentleman for travel-