

doubt as to whether the sum provided would be sufficient to make the harbour safe and commodious. Apparently, expenditure has not achieved what was anticipated. [The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It has.] I am glad to hear it. I trust there will be a reasonable expenditure for the extension of that harbour, considering the trade done there now and the trade likely to be done. Having due regard to our finances, I will support any expenditure for the improvement of any harbour the trade of which is sufficient to warrant the undertaking. I am pleased to see in the Speech references to legislation on other important matters, such as hospitals, factories, public health, early closing, and railways, and am farther pleased that the promised Bills are not numerous. I should prefer fewer Bills, and those few threshed out thoroughly, to the multiplicity of Bills we have had in past sessions. I am in accord with the views of the preceding speaker on the Factories Bill. At the present time a Factories Act is premature. We have not the factories; when we have them will, I think, be the time to deal with them. In conclusion, whatever Bills come before us shall have my earnest consideration, and I trust during this session to see Acts placed on the statute book which will promote the welfare of this great country. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, and in agreeing generally with the Government policy, subject to the details of promised legislation being to my satisfaction.

On motion by HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE, debate adjourned until the next sitting.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House adjourned at 6.15 o'clock until the next day.

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 22nd July, 1903.

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The Council met at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

The CLERK announced that, owing to illness, the President was unable to be present; and, on motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Hon. H. Briggs took the Chair as Acting President.

#### PRAYERS.

#### OBITUARY—THE POPE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill): I wish to make a very few remarks upon a subject regarding which most members will agree with me, and express regret at the removal by death of one of the most prominent persons in the world. I allude to the death of the head of the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope. I feel sure that whatever the shades of opinion in men's minds may be, we must all recognise that in the loss which the Roman Catholic Church has sustained, the whole world is also involved. We have lost an intellectual gentleman whose influence was always on the side of enlightenment and progress; and I feel certain that while those persons in the community who perhaps came more directly into contact with him through belonging to the Roman Catholic faith, feel the loss more keenly, still the whole world must feel that loss also. I do not propose to make any formal motion, but simply to place upon record an expression of the regret which must be felt throughout the civilised world at the loss of such an eminent citizen.

#### QUESTION—POISON LEASE FORFEITURE.

HON. W. MALEY asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, The date on which Poison

Lease No.  $\frac{A}{258}$  was forfeited. 2, If Mr. Janczyk, the agent for the former lessees, re-applied for portions of the lease for himself and another. 3, If the name of Mr. J. G. Jenkins, the Premier of South Australia, or that of his son, was associated with the said agent in the recent application for new poison leases of forfeited lands. 4, If it is the intention of the Government to grant the poison leases they applied for.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, 31st December, 1902. 2, Yes. 3, Mr. J. G. Jenkins also applied for a portion of the land. 4, No.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY SLEEPING CARS, LIGHTING.

HON. G. BELLINGHAM asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Why some of the electric-lighted sleeping cars have been taken off the Eastern Goldfields Railway line, and replaced by the old kerosene-lighted sleepers. 2, If this is only temporary. 3, When will it be remedied.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The electrically-lit sleeping cars are only withdrawn from the Eastern Goldfields line for purposes of repair, or to be charged, and their absence from traffic is rendered as short as possible.

#### SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill) moved:

That, unless otherwise ordered, the House do meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m., and sit until 6:30 p.m. if necessary, and if requisite from 7:30 p.m. onwards.

HON. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): In the event of the motion being carried, would it prevent the House from altering the hour from 4:30 later in the session? Some members came down here and wasted a day.

HON. G. BELLINGHAM: "Unless otherwise ordered."

HON. C. A. PIESSE: The Federal House met at half-past 2, and he did not see why this House could not meet at 3 o'clock, at any rate.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: If the hon. member would come, he (Dr. Hackett) would give him an hour's work.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: According to the very wording of the

motion, the House would be at perfect liberty to alter the hour of meeting. It would necessitate a motion that the House at its rising should adjourn until such and such an hour on such and such a date.

Question put and passed.

#### COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

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

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—The President, Hon. J. W. Hackett, and the mover; 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. Lorton, Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom, Hon. B. C. Wood, and the mover; with power to act during the recess, and to confer with any similar committee of the Legislative Assembly.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.—Motion made that the President, Hon. H. Briggs, Hon. A. G. Jenkins, and the mover, be the Library Committee, with the usual powers.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Was it the duty of the Library Committee to see that the Library was kept up to date regarding the Statutes of the other States? So far as this House was concerned, there was considerable difficulty in getting information in relation to what was going on in the other States, owing to the backward condition of the Library with regard to those Statutes. It should be the duty of the committee to see that in future we were better supplied. Even if the State had to purchase copies, it would be a great advantage to have them up to date.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There could be no question as to the necessity for keeping the records of comparative legislation up to date. No doubt the matter would receive attention if brought to the notice of the Library Committee.

Question passed.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.—Motion made that the President, Hon. G. Randell, and the mover, be the Printing Committee.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What were the duties of the Printing Committee?

How often had the committee met last session? Had the advice of the committee been asked with regard to the printing of certain papers? At the time of the appointment of this committee last session, an announcement was made that it was intended to effect certain economies, and that various papers hitherto printed would not be printed in future. One would be glad to know why papers of great importance had not been included in the list of printed documents. Very serious oversights had occurred.

HON. G. RANDELL: Although a member of the Printing Committee last session, he feared he could throw no light whatever on the matter. So far as he could recollect, he had not been asked to meet his colleagues during the whole course of the session.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What guarantee had we that papers laid before the Council only, or asked for in the Council, would be printed? Who had acted as censor of the printed documents?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: While greatly regretting his inability to give all the information asked for, he had to point out that, owing to his recent accession to this House, he was not in possession of all the data which should perhaps be at his command. The duty of the Printing Committee, he understood, was to make a selection of the papers presented to Parliament for printing. He could only regret that the selection made last year had not met with Dr. Hackett's approval. The hon. member had not been very explicit, but any omissions which had occurred were no doubt due to mere inadvertence.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Would the Colonial Secretary ascertain and state at the next meeting of the House who had acted as censor, who had exercised the right of exclusion and inclusion?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Inquiry would be made.

Question passed.

#### PRISONS BILL.

Introduced by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and read a first time.

#### BREAD BILL.

Introduced by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and read a first time.

#### NOXIOUS WEEDS BILL.

Introduced by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and read a first time.

#### LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and read a first time.

#### RETURN—PUBLIC OFFICES RENTED.

HON. A. G. JENKINS moved that a Return be laid on the table showing—  
1, What Government Departments rent offices in Perth for the purposes of carrying on their business. 2, The terms for which such offices are leased. 3, Annual rent paid; if such rent increases annually, the amount of such annual increase. The object of the motion was to obtain certain facts bearing on a proposal by the Government to give away a most valuable site to the municipality of Perth, whilst various buildings and offices in the city were rented for public purposes.

Question passed.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### THIRD DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous day.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE (South): I am thoroughly in accord with the Address-in-reply, so far as it regards His Excellency the Governor, in whom we have a gentleman evidently determined to make himself thoroughly cognisant of the necessities of Western Australia. All of us must be pleased to observe that His Excellency takes so great an interest in the country. He has already made a trip to the north as far as Nannine; yesterday he visited the Mornington Mills; and I believe the day is not far distant when the Eastern Goldfields will have the honour of entertaining him. I desire also to tender my congratulations to the Colonial Secretary, the Hon. W. Kingsmill. The first paragraph of the Speech which really affects us is that dealing with the Trans-Australian Railway. I greatly regret to observe the apathy, and even opposition, shown by the South Australian Legislature towards that work, which was practically promised to the electors of this State when the Federal Enabling Bill was before them. One cannot but fore-

see that strained relations are likely to arise if the opposition of the sister State continues. Undoubtedly, we are at present isolated from the rest of the Australian continent, and we shall remain so until that great work, the Transcontinental Railway, is completed. I trust that an effort will be made to raise a great agitation throughout the country for the purpose of insisting that the Legislature of the sister State shall show some consideration to Western Australia, so that the promise held out at the time when federation was put before the people may be kept. I am perfectly in accord with the intention expressed by the Government in the Speech to construct a new line of railway—for it is that practically—from here to Kalgoorlie. The 3ft. 6in. gauge is generally considered not to be one on which fast trains can be run to time, and therefore to lay a line of broader gauge is a good move. Opinions vary as to whether the 4ft. 8½in. gauge is better than the 5ft. 3in. As one who has worked on railways, I prefer the 5ft. 3in. gauge, because of its still greater breadth. Unquestionably, heavier machinery can be carried over that gauge than over the 4ft. 8½in. In a country like Western Australia, where heavy loads have to be carried—for example, from Collie to the goldfields—it is a pity that the original gauge was not 5ft. 3in., as in South Australia. Some great engineers hold that the 4ft. 8½in. gauge is amply wide enough, whilst others favour the 5ft. 3in. However, the divergence of opinion is not a great matter, seeing that high speed can be attained with heavy loads on the 4ft. 8½in. gauge. In connection with the Coolgardie Water Scheme, I observe that certain resolutions have been carried on the goldfields; and, to my mind, there is reason in those resolutions. We goldfields residents, as a whole, do not mind paying the heavy price demanded for fresh water; we are all extremely pleased to have the fresh water; but we are not disposed to be heavily taxed in addition to paying a heavy price for that necessity of life. If the Government fix a high rate for the water, they should not expect to be allowed to tax the goldfields residents as heavily as at present. I trust something will be done to prevent the goldfields residents from feeling as their heaviest

burden in domestic life the payment for that prime necessity, fresh water.

HON. C. A. PRESSE: What is the difference between the present cost of fresh water on the goldfields and that paid before the completion of the scheme?

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: The goldfields residents were promised fresh water at 8s. 6d. per thousand gallons, and now they are paying 7s. 6d. The actual cost at which fresh water could be supplied is about five shillings a thousand gallons, but now we are paying 7s. 6d., and we do not mind paying that amount, but we object to paying 7s. 6d. as well as a heavy rate, and I do not think it was ever intended that we should pay a heavy rate besides paying the price of the water. The whole thing was looked upon as an investment. Certain moneys had to be expended, and the amount received from the sale of water was gone carefully into. The Government thought or made sure or understood that the price of 7s. 6d. would pay interest and sinking fund, but on the top of that they are charging us a heavy rate as well.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Do the people not get value for the rate?

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: I have not heard that we are allowed an amount of water for the rate: if we are, it means practically the same thing, but I understand we are not allowed that. That is the reason of the strong resolutions which came from the goldfields recently. With regard to the redistribution of seats, I am opposed to tinkering with the Constitution, and seeing, as I said before, that we are meeting with a certain amount of opposition from South Australia regarding our just rights and the promises made to us at the time when the Federal Bill was being considered, I think we are safe in having a good number of members in our Legislature, so far away from the other operating bodies. For that reason I trust that when the Government introduce the Bill there will be no reduction of members. There may be some necessity to alter the present boundaries, but I think the numbers of members at the present time are not too great in view of the fact that we have nearly half the continent of Australia to administer. With regard to the proposed railway construction referred to in the Speech, I do not know much about the Janda-

kot railway, but having noticed a map that is at present hanging in one of the Club rooms, I am of opinion that the requirements could be well met by the making of good roads, seeing that the greatest distance between any two stations through which the proposed railway will run is about eight miles, and I do not think any farmer minds bringing his produce to market or to a station eight miles away, whereas the expense of running a new railway such as that would be would reach a considerable amount, and I do not think the railway would pay. Anyhow, I am not saying I will oppose the Bill because I am here as a goldfields member. I am willing to assist the coastal members where practicable. There is one railway, however, which I think the Government, in a rising place like Perth, should have considered. I have often asked myself since being a resident here whether the people of Perth could go for an afternoon to the sea beach, and I cannot find any watering place whatever, nor do I think that ordinary people who desire to have a day on the beach can either. For that reason I am surprised that no effort is being made by the Government to tap the long beach or the North Beach. A short railway of four miles would give to the people of Perth a good watering place, and a cheap one. They could get a return ticket for sixpence, the same as people in the Eastern States. For the same reason the great masses on the goldfields are desirous of having their coasts tapped, and I am surprised also that the Esperance Railway is not yet allowed. I am sure that, apart from Esperance being a watering place for the goldfields, the railway would pay, seeing the immense amount of cargo it would be required to carry for the great mines there. I think that the railway from Collie to the Great Southern line is very much wanted. I feel certain the railway would pay, and not only that, but it would make a greater portion of the Great Southern Railway pay, because experiments with Collie coal on the goldfields have now been a success. Collie coal is undoubtedly a good fuel, and I think that if it can be landed at a price fairly reasonable and somewhere near that of the tonnage of goods it will be greatly used. I notice the Government have in

view the construction of a dock at Fremantle. That is a work which would have my hearty support. I understand that the nearest dock to Fremantle at the present time is a small dock at Adelaide. There is a larger one at Melbourne, and I believe they have a dock at Singapore. I think the scheme of a graving dock at Fremantle would be a paying one, and also that if the Admiralty were properly approached they would probably subsidise the work, because there is a large, open sea to the west of us, and to the south there is no land; consequently men-of-war and merchant vessels would be glad to have some place to which they could go to effect any repairs rendered necessary after a storm. I am glad to notice also that the Government intend to bring in a new mining Bill. Our mining regulations at the present time are by no means good, especially in the case of alluvial miners. I noticed during the recess that there were many outcries of the unemployed. I think that if liberal legislation with regard to alluvial mining were passed whereby alluvial miners could get a sufficient number of acres to sink for gold or dig for gold, say 100 feet deep, a good number of the unemployed would be absorbed. I happen to know the alluvial fields on the Eastern Goldfields, where gold in its alluvial form can be found at a depth of 100 feet; but the present regulations will not permit an alluvial miner to have more than eight acres, and eight acres would require the employment of eight men. It would never pay any man to do that. I know it is likely that a measure will be placed before the House this session which will be more liberal than that which has been in existence in the past, and I trust it will be the means of absorbing a good deal of labour. I notice, also, that there are other Bills before the House; experiments, I think I might call them. We have a Bread Bill before us. That was a new Bill last year, and here it is up again this session for alteration. [MEMBER: It was not passed.] Anyhow, I trust that when these measures come before us they will be in a concrete form, and I am sure due consideration will be given to them. I have much pleasure in supporting the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): I am sure we all feel considerable regret

at the absence of our President to-day, through illness, and we trust he will soon recover. With regard to the Governor's Speech, His Excellency has not been very long in this State, but from what we know and have observed I am sure we feel that we have in him a man who will be able to perform the duties of his position with credit to himself and satisfaction to the country. Everyone in this House will also congratulate Mr. Kingsmill on his appointment to the post of leader of the Government in this House. His genial bearing and his tact and diplomacy will enable him to carry out the duties with credit to himself and satisfaction to Parliament generally. I feel satisfied this will be the case. As to the Speech of the Governor, a great deal is said with respect to the construction of the Transcontinental Railway. I regret to say I cannot place so much importance upon the construction of that railway as the Government seem to put upon it. I look at the matter in this way. Will it open up our pastoral country, mineral country, and agricultural country? One can only reply in the negative. There is no agricultural country which will be opened up by it, little or no pastoral country that will be opened up by it, and I know of no mines that will be opened up by it; therefore I cannot see that the State will be affected to such an enormous extent through this railway not being constructed. However, I may be wrong in the opinion I have formed. It may be a work of immense importance and a work that will advance the interests of the State in the future. To a great extent I may be wrong, but I think it will be very unwise of this country to enter into any expense unless the Commonwealth will undertake the construction of the whole line; and I certainly should be adverse to the State entering into the expenditure that will be incurred by constructing that line on the broad gauge until the construction of the Transcontinental Railway by the Commonwealth is a matter of certainty. It does not appear that federation is bringing the innumerable benefits it was supposed it would do. We were to have this Transcontinental Railway constructed almost immediately, and we were to have a large number of other benefits; but what do we see? Complications and

taxation. I cannot see in what way we have benefited, nor do I see in what way we shall benefit in the future. As to the opening of the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme, I am afraid that in consequence of the copious fall of rain we have had, our goldfields friends do not appreciate the advantages this water supply will be to them; but I hope that when they get thirsty they will do so. We may not be so favoured during the next summer, and then they will find how important it is to have a permanent supply of water at hand. At the same time the cost of the water will be very moderate. None of us would draw water from an ordinary well, even three feet deep or 50 feet deep, at 7s. 6d. per thousand gallons. It seems to me it is unreasonable that the people on the goldfields should cavil at the cost of the water. I know that at Northam we do not grumble. We are very glad to get it, and we there have to pay 5s. or 6s. a thousand gallons. It is a great advantage to us and it will be of much good to many residents. I hope that when the weather gets considerably warmer, our goldfields will fully appreciate the immense value of this water scheme to them. I am sure we all regret the resignation of Senator Ewing, but I suppose he found he was not able to accomplish the great amount of good that he anticipated he would be able to do, and therefore he gave it up in disgust. However, Mr. Saunders has been appointed, and he appears willing to hold the position during the remainder of the term. I think it right that he should retain the seat until it becomes vacant by effluxion of time. The Royal Commission on the Public Service is a subject which I do not think affords the State reason for self-gratulation. It seems to me that the country has put £6,000 into an investment which is not very paying. The recommendations of the commission have not been carried out. The work to be done seems to me less suited for a body of men than it would be for one calm, cool man of experience in such matters. However, the commissioners have had a pleasant time travelling about the country at the expense of the State, and it seems to me they have done very little for the expense they have caused. The prospects of the

State are very satisfactory in every respect. Agricultural developments have been greater in the last couple of years than was ever anticipated. I hope that everything will be done to encourage agricultural population to settle here and to develop country which has hitherto lain waste. We know that there is a large extent of good, rich, fertile land only awaiting development; but for the development of that land, in order to enable selectors to occupy it, the first necessity is a supply of water; and I trust that the Government will keep that point in sight and do all they possibly can to afford supplies of water in good agricultural country, either by conservation or by boring. As regards constitutional and electoral law, I think we ought to be careful. I do not see that it is always necessary to be tinkering with the Constitution; indeed, I think the more we do in that respect the worse we are off. The State is an immense one, and every part of it requires fair and just representation. Certainly I shall always be opposed to representation on a purely population basis. Any part of the State is likely to rise in importance at any time. Mineral or agricultural or fruit-growing country, each will get its turn of progress. Therefore it would be highly unwise to deprive any part of the State of its proper representation. Public works of a reproductive character should, of course, not be delayed; but I certainly hold that no works which while not immediately reproductive will involve large expenditure should be entered on before there is absolute necessity for doing so. The Laverton district has hitherto been rather neglected, and from what I have heard of that goldfield and of its mineral capabilities I should say that the construction of a railway is thoroughly justified. I hope it will not be considered necessary during this session to make many or important amendments in the Land Regulations. The Speech contains a reference to a measure of that character, but I trust it will always be borne in mind that under existing regulations certain rights have been created and established, and that there must be a tendency to interfere with those established and created rights by alterations and amendments of the law. Sufficient regard has not always been paid to that

aspect of the matter. We cannot be too careful, when dealing with amendments and alterations of the law, to safeguard existing rights and interests. The Speech refers to a projected railway from Woodmans Point to Armadale. The country which it will traverse is I think poor, and will require a considerable amount of Government assistance to make it payable. A good deal of it is sandy and rocky land, but still it can be made profitable by cultivation. Undoubtedly, a railway will lead to a good deal of settlement besides effecting great economies in the carriage of timber and coal. The line will not be long or costly, and therefore I am disposed to consider its construction favourably. A dock for Fremantle is a long projected work, and I am astonished that not more has been done in that direction. This House some years ago affirmed the absolute necessity for the construction of a dock at Fremantle, but the matter has been put off and off until, even up to the present day, little or nothing has been done. No doubt, proper information and reports by thoroughly competent engineers are most desirable, as well as data with respect to the most favourable situation for the work. I know so little of the subject that I shall not venture a personal opinion. There is no doubt, however, that the dock is of great importance to the State as well as to the town of Fremantle, and therefore I hope it will be constructed as quickly as possible. Reference is made to the port of Bunbury, and I feel sure that no one who saw Bunbury before the construction of the breakwater and jetty, and who sees it now, can fail to be impressed with the greatness of the improvement those works have effected. They have led to a large development of trade, and the town has been enormously benefited. I feel satisfied that hon. members will not hesitate for a moment in conceding the desirability of affording Bunbury additional harbour facilities. The existing breakwater is not long enough to protect the whole of the harbour, and the jetty also requires extension, being unsafe for a number of vessels. The holding ground, in particular, is of an undesirable character. When I visited Bunbury on the occasion of the recent banquet, I was much struck with a remark of Captain

Laurie, who suggested, as one of the most desirable works in connection with the Bunbury harbour, the laying down of buoys. The idea presented itself to me as most reasonable and feasible. Vessels cannot now lie at the Bunbury jetty during rough weather without imminent danger of being swept ashore, the holding ground being of such a hard nature that they cannot bear on their anchors at all. If proper moorings were laid down, a great safeguard would be afforded to vessels during the time they are waiting to take in cargo. I trust the work will commend itself to the House and that the Government will do as much as possible in that direction without delay. The Speech makes a reference to the railways and to a reduction of freights on the goldfields lines. I think there is room for a good deal of improvement in many directions as regards railway administration, but I cannot think that our goldfields friends have reason to complain when they pay the same rates as are paid for railway carriage to any other part of the State. In this connection it should be borne in mind that trucks and carriages running to the goldfields return empty, there being no back freight. In such circumstances the goldfields, to my mind, have no reason to complain so long as they pay only the same freights as are paid by all other parts of the State.

HON. G. BELLINGHAM: But trucks run empty to agricultural districts, though they return loaded.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Trucks running to agricultural districts carry something. The people in the agricultural districts consume, as well as the people on the goldfields. As regards loans, I feel very much as Mr. Randell does, that we ought to be most cautious and that no attempts should be made to borrow except for works of a directly productive nature. All works which can possibly be constructed out of revenue should be so paid for. For my part, I should be loth to see a farther loan authorisation, unless it be for some most desirable work. I hope that when the Estimates are framed we shall all have reason to be satisfied with the manner in which the expenditure will be mapped out for the coming year, and I trust that the revenue will be sufficient to allow of our carrying on without farther borrowing.

The proposal to establish a water supply and sewerage system in the metropolitan area leads me to express the opinion that the metropolitan area gets far more consideration than does any agricultural or pastoral area. If the agriculturists or pastoralists want a trifling grant towards the construction of a road, the money is given grudgingly by the Government, and we are told that "for the future we must help ourselves as the Government cannot give us any more." Now, roads are the most important public work of the State, since they serve for the conveyance of produce to market; therefore, they ought to be one of the first items of public expenditure. I hold that money for this purpose ought not to be given grudgingly, with such a remark as "Unless you rate yourselves, you cannot expect any more." I maintain that settlers in agricultural and pastoral districts, in common with the rest of the people, pay heavy taxes, and that they have the right to ask that those taxes shall be expended in the most advantageous way. I always feel somewhat irritated when the construction I have indicated is put on the matter of grants. Roads, I say, are the arteries of the country, and they ought to be maintained out of revenue altogether. Coming to the education question, I have never had much to say on it; but I know the necessity for it, and I think that when schools are being erected throughout the State, more care should be given to have buildings that will not only be sufficient for the time, but for the population hereafter. Many schools are erected which in a short time become incapable of giving the required accommodation; therefore such buildings ought to have been made larger, with more regard to future necessity. This is a matter which ought to be carefully looked into when these schools are being constructed, and I also think that in the appointment of masters a great deal might be done. How few pay any attention to the morals and conduct of the scholars! A great deal might be done by the schoolmasters in impressing upon their pupils the desirability of being truthful and honest, and good and kind to each other. There seems to be a sort of prejudice against anything approaching religion. Surely no religious body would object to proper principles being



inculcated into the minds of the pupils by the masters, whatever class of schools they may be. Much greater supervision should be exercised over the schoolmasters throughout the State, and we should have none but good-principled and well-conducted men to act as schoolmasters, who should be paid better than they are. With reference to the University, I think such an institution will be desirable in the future, and I hope some rich old bachelors will contribute towards the cost of construction. I shall be one of the first to move that they shall do so. I trust that something will be done in this direction. I will not say more, but I hope this session will terminate as all sessions have done in the past, and that we shall be able to effect some good, and prove that the Legislative Council are not such a body of mummies as they are sometimes represented to be. I hope we shall show when the time comes that we are able to vote in the right direction and support measures that are desirable, and fearlessly oppose those that are undesirable. I trust we shall separate with the same amount of goodwill and good feeling as has existed hitherto.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM (North) : In rising to make a few remarks in connection with the Speech by His Excellency, I do not wish to trespass unduly on the patience of members, but at the same time there are many statements in that Speech which require a certain amount of criticism, and there are many omissions that require attention. In the first place it is my pleasant duty to congratulate our good friend the Colonial Secretary on being leader of this House. I feel certain that his genial manner and his facility of expression will do a great deal to get Government measures through this House, which perhaps otherwise the Government might not be successful in doing. The first matter of importance in this Speech to my mind is this : "The recent movement in the mother country towards securing closer trade relations between the various parts of the Empire." I look upon this as one of the most important movements of the present day, and personally I am thoroughly in accord with it. [HON. G. RANDELL : What is the movement?] If the hon. member kept himself up with

the times and read the papers, he would find Mr. Chamberlain had stated that he would like an inquiry made as to what would be the best means of bringing the various parts of the Empire together, with regard to fiscal questions and keeping the trade amongst themselves. I think that is the question at the present moment, and I am thoroughly in accord that this inquiry should be made. I can only say that as far as the Australian or any colonists are concerned—any producers in the colonies—nothing but advantage can accrue to them under this arrangement. It makes a certain market for them, and if they can have this market secured for them against all foreigners, it will be for their advantage. Whether it would be an advantage to manufacturing people in the United Kingdom is a point which I do not propose to argue, and I am certain there are sufficiently clever business men in that little United Kingdom of ours to look after that question. Our point of view is that it would be to our advantage to have this market secured to us—an advantage to all the colonies—and, therefore, I consider that every person residing in the colonies should give every help and facility he can to the proposals made by the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain that this inquiry should go through. The next question that appeals to me is with regard to the opening of the Goldfields Water Scheme, and I must admit it is a satisfaction to find we have arrived at such a gratifying stage as to see that the water has reached the goldfields. I feel certain it will do a very great deal of good. I find now by the papers that there is some opposition on the part of the goldfields residents to paying the cost of this water, and in a speech that was made here this afternoon, this view of the matter was reiterated. As one of the members of the Executive who agreed to that scheme, and who voted the money and had it placed before Parliament, I am perfectly satisfied that the idea at that time was that the scheme was to be self-supporting. When it was first brought forward by Sir John Forrest—I am not, I suppose, disclosing anything I should not disclose—I was a member of the Cabinet, and I was absolutely opposed to the scheme. I was opposed to it on several grounds. First of all I considered it was too large

a sum of money to spend on one district, and for one object. The next objection was that the scheme would cripple the borrowing powers of the colony for some considerable time to come, and stop the development of other portions of the colony. The third objection was that it was just possible at that time, seven years ago, that the mines would not be permanent. Those objections of mine were answered in the following manner. First, it was said that the scheme was absolutely practicable. The next assertion was that without a cheap and plentiful supply of water the goldfields could not continue to exist, that the smaller "shows," the low-grade ores, could not be worked. The third statement was that the scheme could be erected and carried out for a sum of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions, and the water could be sold for 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons, and that 3s. 6d. a thousand gallons, providing five million gallons a day were used, would pay working expenses, interest, and sinking fund. It was to repay the amount in about 22 or 23 years. This was given on the assurance of the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. O'Connor, and I think it is a tribute to his cleverness that the scheme has been carried out well within the sum he named. It was this assurance that stopped my personal opposition to the scheme any longer. I said that if the water, regarding the matter as a business proposition, could be sold at 3s. 6d. a thousand gallons, and the scheme would pay working expenses and interest, and sinking fund redeemable in 22 years, I no longer objected. You will see by that it was always proposed that the goldfields, the people who used the water, should pay for it. I said if it would do that, I did not feel myself justified in opposing the scheme any longer. Now I find that there is some opposition to it, and I have only to say this—whatever arrangements are made now of course I have nothing to do with—when the enterprise was brought forward at first it was always intended that the users of the water should pay for it, and that the other portions of the colony should not be responsible for it. [MEMBER: That does not say it is right.] I do not say that is right. I am only saying exactly the conditions under which the scheme was carried out. It was publicly stated at the time. There was no concealment

about it. It was distinctly stated, and as I happened to be a member of the Cabinet I am only just putting on record my reminiscences of it, and showing exactly what the views of the Government were at that time. The next important subject to deal with is this sewerage scheme, and I cannot too highly congratulate the Government upon adopting it. The only fault is that it ought to have been done very much sooner, and I can only say that if I had my political career over again, with the little knowledge and experience I have acquired since I left the Government, there are many works and buildings I would have nothing to do with until this scheme was carried out. We are too fond of bricks and mortar, and we spend too much on them. There are one or two little things like the Observatory and the Mint that might well have been left alone, and we would have had this sewerage scheme in Perth, and Perth would have been a thriving city instead of what it is now. I am afraid to say what it is at the present moment.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: One does not exclude the other.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: Yes, it does, because it was said we were unable to afford the sewerage scheme.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The city and not the country would have to pay for the sewerage scheme.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: I come to the next question of interest to me, in connection with education; and whilst I am generally in accord with the Government in this matter, I think their proposals as to the University are absolutely premature. We have here an excellent system of elementary education. We have the High School which we may look upon as a school for secondary education, but which is an absolute disgrace to the community. I am one of those who believe that every boy after getting his education at school likes to look back to the school with a little pride. Will anyone stand up and tell me that any boy who goes to the present High School will in future look back with pride to that school?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: You are speaking of the buildings.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: I am speaking of the grounds.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Not the staff.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: No. It is the ground, which is absolutely a disgrace. What boy can look back with pride to that school as having a beautiful cricket patch, a lovely football ground, and a beautiful fence? Boys would be ashamed to own such a place as we have in Perth. We have excellent schools, and unless they are going to make this a good institution it would be better to leave it alone. I am not speaking of the academical part, because I do not know much about that, but I am only speaking of the surroundings, and I think this High School may be improved into a good secondary school. At all events we have private secondary schools which serve their purpose, and there is not the slightest necessity for a University. That is another expenditure in bricks and mortar. I do not say that the Government purpose to build a university: they purpose merely to take the preliminary steps for the establishment of a university in the future, and with that I do not quarrel in the least. By all means let a reserve of the kind be made, but do not let us build a university for some considerable time yet. We must bear in mind that the few boys who want a university education can take advantage of the universities established in four other capitals by the most lavish expenditure, which has been regretted ever since.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Will you name the four capitals?

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney; and the other I forget.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The form of teaching there is different altogether.

HON. G. RANDELL: Tasmania has a university.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: It is far better that the few boys who want a university training should go elsewhere to obtain it. If the establishment of a University here is designed merely to place university education within the reach of those few, then I say it is better to let them go to a university elsewhere and pay their expenses.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: They cannot get the class of education here in view.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: Dr. Hackett will be able to talk presently.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: But you are talking something like nonsense.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: It may be so in Dr. Hackett's opinion. I may point out that the American people have devised a system of education second to none in the world, having spent no end of money on secondary education, universities, and so forth, while the result shows that the very people for whom this education has been provided, namely the poorer classes, are unable for lack of time to take advantage of it. The children of the poorer classes have to go to business as soon as they possibly can. The consequence is that the American people find that they provide a free educational system for the leisured, rich classes, who can well afford to pay for education out of their own pockets. It is the leisured rich who take advantage of these institutions in America. Of course, the theory of the thing is all right.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Really, you are dreaming!

[Several interjections.]

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: I must ask hon. members to listen to the speaker in silence.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Must we listen in silence if he makes such statements?

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: Will Dr. Hackett show me where I am wrong?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Will you apply to me for the information?

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: At all events, I happen to know what I am talking about on this subject.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: You might, on something else.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: As I was saying when so rudely interrupted, in many places extravagant expenditure has been incurred—New South Wales, and Victoria during the boom time, afford instances in point—on university education; with what result? New South Wales spent as much as £800,000 a year on education, and are the young people of New South Wales any better educated or any better off? Not a bit. To my mind, great danger exists nowadays of over-educating people. There is a tendency to educate the young beyond their positions, with the result that every boy wants a clerical position, wants to enter an office, and that no one will go on the land. The young are educated to

regard work as disgraceful, to think that the pen is the only instrument which ought to be handled. Therefore, to my mind it is a great mistake to put too much of what may be called public expenditure into education. We have already a first-class system of elementary education, and our next need is first-class technical schools, so that when children pass the compulsory age they may take up that part of the system which is thought fittest for them. But to expect that people who have their living to earn will attend universities is to expect the impossible. Only those with means and leisure can take advantage of universities, and they can pay for their education. In my opinion, we are a little premature as regards universities; and if a proposal comes before this House for public expenditure on a university, hon. members may rely on my opposition. Dr. Hackett may put that in his pipe and smoke it.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I will; no doubt about it.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: Next, I come to a question which has been heard of before in this State, namely that of hospital administration. In this respect I am in accord with what has fallen from Mr. Connolly. Private subscriptions towards hospitals are an absolute mistake. Hospitals should be maintained by the country, since they are places where the indigent, who are unable to pay for attendance, may be treated free of charge. Anyone who, not being indigent, desires to avail himself of the skill and facilities obtainable at the hospitals can pay for treatment. Why should a few generous people subscribe to maintain hospitals for the poor? The charge should be one on the whole country. Let the State maintain the hospitals, and let us have no more private subscriptions. The number of institutions for which one has to put his hand in his pocket is quite large enough, without the super-addition of the hospitals. The charge may fairly be borne by the revenue of the State. Those who desire to take advantage of the exceptional skill available at the hospitals may do so, but let them pay for it. Then the matter will be on a sound business footing. The only other point I desire to touch on as regards the Speech has to do with a

little boat called the "Julia Percy." I quite recognise that in this connection the Government were actuated by good intentions, but I scarcely know whether these good intentions were directed towards the people of Geraldton or towards the Midland Railway Company. I take it, however, that the intention must have been to benefit the town of Geraldton. It appears that in seeking to carry out their good intentions the Government overlooked one or two little points, the consequence being that the result has been very bad. In the first place a boat has been subsidised. I may mention, just by the way, that various people have complained that full opportunities have not been allowed for tendering. Personally, I am aware that tenders were called on the first occasion, when no satisfactory offers resulted; whether on the second occasion everybody had an equal chance of tendering I am not prepared to say. Divergent views on the point have been aired in the Press and elsewhere. The result of the subsidising of the boat is that the exporters of goods from Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney are charged only 2s. 6d. per ton more for freight to Geraldton than for freight to Fremantle. The consequence is that everyone in Geraldton or on the stations beyond who desires to order goods from the Eastern States gets them at a through rate of 2s. 6d. added to the freight to Fremantle, and thus escapes paying the 10s. freight charged by the "Julia Percy" for transport from Fremantle to Geraldton. The ultimate consequence is that the Geraldton business has been taken taken out of the hands of Fremantle traders. Next, the Government give a bill of lading under which goods are deliverable at any railway station, so that a purchaser 100 miles inland from Geraldton ordering 10 tons of wire, say, has it sent up by the "Julia Percy" on a through bill of lading; and thus the business is done by the State instead of by the Geraldton traders. On the one hand the Government are injuring the business men of Fremantle, and on the other hand they are taking away some of the small trade of the Geraldton merchants. I draw attention to these facts, since they may perhaps have escaped the observation of the leader of the House. I wish to show

him how good intentions may go wrong. The best way, to my mind, of dealing with the matter would be to subsidise a steamer at a certain price, and to leave the rest of the work to the people who usually do it. I take pleasure in congratulating the Government on the condition of the finances and on the position of the State. The condition of the finances, in particular, is excellent; evidently the greatest care has been exercised, and the result is creditable to the Government and satisfactory to the public. I observe that the Government propose to bring in a number of measures, and I hope these will be carried; though I scarcely expect such will be the case with all. Next, I desire to draw attention, as briefly as possible, to various important omissions from the Speech. The first omission is a reference to the attraction of immigrants to this State. We have here thousands and thousands of acres of arable country lying idle; food is at an abnormal price, and labour consequently is dear. Accordingly, one would have thought that one of the first objects of the Government would be to induce as many people as possible to settle on our lands, in order that the price of food may be reduced and the price of labour as a result kept down; but no attempt whatever is made to bring people to Western Australia. During my term of office as Agent General the same policy was pursued. I used to try and induce people to come here, and they would ask me whether the State would pay their passages. When I replied in the negative, they would say, "What is the use of talking, then?" Canada was at that time and is now making every possible effort to secure population, but nothing of the kind is done by any of the Australian States. I do not say that Western Australia is singular in this policy, but I do say that the policy is a miserable one.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Western Australia helps to pay the passages of immigrants.

**SIR E. H. WITTENOOM:** Yes; £10 towards a passage costing £20. I have seen this kind of thing frequently. A man in England is asked to come out here; he has spent all his life in the country; he comes to London, where he is at once lost; he tries to find his way

to the docks to get aboard a steamer; he is hopelessly astray. The man gets £10 towards an outlay of £20, and perhaps he has a family. Formerly, on arrival here he had to wander about without anyone to guide or direct him. In the case of Canada, things are very different. Directly a man says he will go to Canada, he is taken in hand by an agent of the Dominion Government, who guides him to the docks and puts him aboard the steamer; on arrival in Canada another Government agent receives him and shows him the land which he may select.

**HON. C. A. PIESSE:** And the Canadian Government help him to improve the land.

**SIR E. H. WITTENOOM:** So do we here. Nothing in this Speech shows the slightest desire to promote immigration. We are now engaged in an endeavour to steal all the immigrants we possibly can from the other States. Of course, such immigrants are better than those fresh from the old world, because they have been broken in; still, we are doing nothing to induce direct immigration, and I for my part maintain that the time has come when we should do something in that matter. Immigration offers immediate practical advantages. If one wants to borrow money in London, the first thing the financier does is to divide the amount of the indebtedness by the number of population. If then he sees that the debt amounts to £15 or £20 or £30 a head, he becomes chary of lending. It never occurs to the financier to think that the population of the generality of States consists in the main of women and children; he does not know the difference between the population of Western Australia and that of other States. Regardless of the fact that the majority of our people are male adults, the financier simply divides the population into the debt, and then says "I cannot lend you money because your indebtedness is so large already." I maintain, therefore, that every immigrant is of advantage to the State, inasmuch as he puts the State in a better position to secure loans. The next question that has been omitted is that of the attraction of capitalists. Nothing is done in any way to draw and attract the capitalist. Of all things, what

we want in this country is capital. What can we do without capital? You can have an army of labourers as willing as you like, but what is the good unless you have someone to pay for them? You want first of all to attract capital, and when you get it here you want to satisfy the capitalists to some extent that they are investing their money in a way by which they will get some return. The Government have not even done anything to try to get people with capital here. There is no proposition to get rid of the statutes existing, some of those socialistic statutes that are on our books, and which have done so much to drive capitalists away and prevent others from coming. I can mention three Acts which I thought the Government would have repealed this session.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Which are they?

**SIR E. H. WITTENOOM:** I am not going to say: I expect the hon. gentleman knows them. But not a word about them. We are wanting capital and we are wanting population, two of the greatest things, and not a word in this Speech about them. Did you ever hear of such a thing? Not a word in this House about those important matters. I cannot understand it. It seems to me it is a most extraordinary policy. Then again, there is another great omission. Nobody ever thought of mentioning the poor pastoralist; never dreamt of his existence. It is said at the present time that he is able to look after himself. When speaking on the Address-in-Reply last year I tried to advise the Government, but the Government would not take that advice in any way. The difficulty now is to get stock down to the market in good condition, and every facility should be given by the Government for the purpose of getting this stock down. It is not on behalf of the squatter or pastoralist so much as on behalf of the consumer. The pastoralist is getting a good price, but he could take a very much lower price if he had not the risk of losing sheep both by shipping and by routes overland. Therefore I consider it the duty of the Government to give every facility to get stock to the market as cheaply and expeditiously as possible, and in the best order. I commend it to my good friend the Colonial Secretary, who must know the

position thoroughly, and I am absolutely surprised that there is nothing in this Speech saying they are going to get this stock down in good order and condition. I think there is only one other subject in regard to which I will trespass on members' time, and that is the question of railway communication in the North-West. I quite understand this has been omitted from the Speech because the Government are awaiting the report of the Government Geologist. I understand that as soon as that report comes in the Government will be in some sort of definite position, but I must say they are very lukewarm about it. There does not seem very much energy on the part of the Government regarding this railway communication to the North-West. I urge the Government to do something in that way. It is a matter of very great satisfaction to have heard the statement made by the Premier that he is willing to entertain a proposal from any private party to erect a railway there. That is as it should be. I think it would be a very good thing indeed for private enterprise to erect this; almost better perhaps than for the Government, because it can erect a small pioneer line. There is no necessity to have an expensive one. Then if it is found to pay it will be very easy to put in a good line afterwards, especially if the concession be surrounded with such safeguards as will enable the Government to take it over. I think my hon. friend, the leader of the House, knows the district much better than I do. He knows the requirements of it, and I hope that as soon as they are in a position to do it the Government will take the matter in hand and urge it forward with a great deal of energy.

**HON. G. RANDELL:** You do not mention the particular line to which you are referring.

**SIR E. H. WITTENOOM:** Port Hedland.

**HON. G. RANDELL:** You only said the North-West.

**SIR E. H. WITTENOOM:** I think there has been an agitation for only one line. I do not think the North-West would stand more than one. If the Government will only use a little energy in connection with it, and let it be well known that proposals will be accepted from the public with regard to doing it,

I feel quite sure that someone will be forthcoming to do it. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion which is before the House in connection with the Address-in-Reply. I look forward with some little interest to the other speeches, and I feel certain that when my good friend, Dr. Hackett, speaks on the education question we shall have some academic and theoretical objections to what I have said on education; but I shall be quite prepared for a most diverting little speech.

HON. J. M. DREW (Central): I have much pleasure in congratulating Mr. Kingsmill on his entry into this Chamber. I think that with his past parliamentary experience, his abilities, and the good temper which characterises him, he will be an acquisition to the House. We are told in one of the opening paragraphs of His Excellency's Speech that "The recent movement in the mother country towards securing closer trade relations between the various parts of the Empire has been welcomed in this State with feelings of warm sympathy and sincere hopes for its ultimate success." I must certainly protest against this assertion being sent forth to the world as a reflection of the matured opinion of the people of Western Australia. What authority have we for this dogmatic assertion? Preferential trade may be a good thing for Western Australia and for the Empire, or it may not; but we certainly have had no evidence in regard to the opinion of the people of Western Australia on this question. I think it is decidedly wrong that it should be published broadcast to the world that the people of Western Australia have welcomed preferential trade in this State with feelings of warm sympathy, when there has been no definite expression of opinion in connection with the matter in any form whatever. There have been a few leading articles, cautious leading articles, in the Press, but apart from them there has been no public sentiment voiced in connection with the matter. I notice that the Constitution and Electoral Bills that were introduced last session will be re-introduced this, and I trust that they will come before us in such a form as to receive the approval of members. On the last occasion the form in which they were introduced in this

Chamber was a direct invitation to their rejection. The Factories Bill is also promised. No doubt there is a demand in many circles for this measure, and I think that the sooner some legislation of the kind is enacted the better. If members of this Chamber disapprove of the Bill introduced by the leader of the Government, I would suggest that they should carefully consider it and make such amendments as will harmonise with their views. That will be far better and far wiser than rejecting the measure altogether. With regard to the Civil Service Commission, which is touched upon in the course of the Speech, I can scarcely congratulate the Commission or the Government on the result of the Commissioners' labours up to date. They paid flying visits right through the country, armed with the pruning knife, which they used ruthlessly without due consideration. What has been the result? Some of our best men have been either cashiered or cruelly treated as the result of this lightning-speed investigation. What condition now does a civil servant find himself in? His security of tenure is gone, his position is scarcely worth a month's purchase, his salary may be ruthlessly pruned down without the slightest consideration, and his pension is at the mercy of the Government temporarily in power. This in a country which, the Government are perpetually telling us and which it is asserted in the Speech, shows gratifying development in its main industries! I call this not reform, but disorganisation. The Bunbury jetty is referred to in the course of the Speech. So long as I can remember, the Bunbury jetty has been a devouring monster whose appetite is never satisfied. There is an old legend to the effect that about 30 years ago the question came before the old Legislative Council, and one member representing our district made an interjection that if it was farther extended it would interfere with safe navigation! Since that time, much money has been spent on the jetty, and we are asked to spend more in order to develop the export of timber. I have great doubts of the wisdom of exporting such a large quantity of timber. Before supporting a measure for extending the Bunbury jetty at a cost of about £120,000, I should like to have some

proof as to the permanency of the timber export trade, for I feel sure that before very long we shall require in Western Australia a large quantity of this timber for our own use. I also notice from the Speech that a Bill is to be introduced to authorise the construction of a railway from Collie to a point on the Great Southern line. The object of that measure is to open up agricultural land for settlement. It is a very nice thing for people in the South, but it reminds people in the North that the present Government have done next to nothing to encourage land settlement in our district. There is a large amount of arable land in the Victoria district, but the Government have made no genuine efforts to secure the repurchase of some of that land. There is a Lands Purchase Act in existence, and up to the present time £130,000 out of £200,000 authorised by Parliament has been spent in the South, and not a single penny has come to the district I refer to. The only time when we did make an application, our request was refused. We asked the Government to buy the Mount Erin estate, consisting of 9,100 acres of freehold, 10,000 acres of conditional purchase, and 43,000 acres pastoral lease. It was one of the best estates available in those districts. It was selected in pioneer days, and the natural assumption is that the men who selected it selected the best land available. It was offered for sale at the low price of 11s. per acre for the conditional purchase and freehold, with the 43,000 acres of pastoral lease thrown in, and all the improvements. The Land Board visited our district and spent two days in the locality, but refused to recommend the purchase. Our position is this. If the board refused to recommend the repurchase of that estate, they must as a consequence refuse to repurchase any estate in the district, for the simple reason that we have no better estate available, and there are no better estates likely to be offered to the Government. It is rather a striking comment on the action of the board that in less than a week after they refused to recommend this repurchase, the Yarragehadee estate, consisting of 4,000 acres, was sold for £10,600, this being £2 10s. an acre; yet land almost as good, if not quite so, was refused by the Government at 11s.

an acre, with the 43,000 acres of pastoral lease included. It was stated in the course of their report that the demand for land was limited in the Victoria District. The cry throughout the whole district is for more land. Facts will convince sometimes when argument is of no avail.

MEMBER: Should you not blame the board instead of the Government?

HON. J. M. DREW: I am blaming the board. For the last 14 months a million and a quarter acres of land of all kinds were taken up. There were 21,397 acres of conditional purchase under Section 55, 17,006 acres of conditional purchase under Section 56, 74,163 acres grazing lease, 3,960 acres homestead; in all, 116,526 acres of land which would be ultimately converted into freehold; besides 1,200,000 acres of pastoral lease. Then we are told by the board that the demand for land in the district is limited. Now, as a matter of fact, certain farmers residing in the district are about to move south simply because they cannot get land where they are. Geraldton is almost surrounded by land which, as the result of careful negotiations, could be purchased by the Government, and which would afford room for much settlement. As regards the Marble Bar railway, I heartily support the construction of the line. To my mind, the manner in which the North-West has been treated in the past is shameful. I sincerely trust that by the time the next Parliament assembles the Government will have done something towards the construction of that line. I am largely in accord with the remarks of Sir Edward Wittenoom in regard to the establishment of a University. In my opinion, it is decidedly wrong for the State to subsidise an educational institution which can be utilised in the main only by the children of the rich. If rich men desire that their sons shall receive a university education, they can send them to the universities in the Eastern States. We ought to do all in our power to improve the elementary school system in order that the children of the people as a whole may receive a good education. I think it would be premature for me to express at this juncture an opinion on the railways and public works proposals of the Government. In these matters I shall consider the arguments and statistics



which will be laid before the House. Sir Edward Wittenoom referred to the "Julia Percy," and seemed to be in some doubt whether every steamship company had had an opportunity of tendering. The question was before the country for something like 12 months, and I myself have seen a list which shows that almost every steamship company in Australasia was invited to tender. The lowest tender demanded something like £10,000 for half the service supplied by the "Julia Percy." The offer was to furnish one service a week for £10,000 per annum, whilst the "Julia Percy" does two trips per week for something like half the amount. Sir Edward Wittenoom displayed a great deal of sympathy with the people of Geraldton, but I think his remarks were somewhat inconsistent. He first complained that the Geraldton traders would secure an undue advantage over the Fremantle merchants, and immediately afterwards remarked that the Fremantle merchants, in getting through freights, would secure an undue advantage over the Geraldton traders. The only Geraldton residents who are affected by the through bill of lading are four forwarding agents. To my mind the interests of the whole of the Murchison people must be paramount as compared with the interests of four forwarding agents. The other subjects touched on in the Speech I shall take an opportunity of dealing with when they come before us in concrete form.

HON. B. C. O'BRIEN (Central): In addressing myself to the question before the House, I desire, in common with other speakers, to express my pleasure at Mr. Kingsmill's presence here. I trust—and I think the event will prove my trust well-founded—that relations between the hon. gentleman and other members of the Chamber will always be of the most amicable character. In passing, I may express a slight feeling of surprise that the Government did not think fit to call Parliament together a little sooner. I think it must be admitted that this is going to be a fighting session, particularly as the general election takes place next year. I venture to prophesy that as the result of our late meeting we shall be sitting here probably right up to Christmas. That is unfair to everybody. Goodness knows, Ministers have had ample

time to prepare for the session since the House adjourned in December last. I can only hope that the event will falsify my prophecy, and that the session will close before the summer fairly sets in. I was indeed sorry to hear certain references made by Mr. Dempster to that great project, the Transcontinental Railway. The hon. member practically said that this was not a necessary work. If such expressions, which throw cold water on the scheme, fall from members of the Western Australian Legislature, whilst others are so earnest in their advocacy of the railway, what will be said of us in South Australia and elsewhere? I think every effort should be made on our part to induce the Federal Government to take the matter up. Seeing that the Commonwealth Houses will dissolve in December next, I say we should strain every nerve to induce the Commonwealth Government to make the early construction of the Transcontinental Railway a plank in their platform. Something should be done to force the hands of the Federal Parliament. That is the most effective means at our disposal for bringing about the early construction of this most necessary and important national work. The Coolgardie Water Scheme is referred to, and I am sure the completion of that work affords matter for all-round congratulation. So far as can be seen at present, the scheme will prove a great success. I am sorry, however, to learn that a few people are crying out about the price of water. In view of the fact that the community at large has to pay for this great work —

MEMBER: Not the whole community; only one section of it.

HON. B. C. O'BRIEN: I think it may be said that in various ways the whole community has to pay for the work, and therefore I hope that the people who are to derive immediate gain from it will be a little patriotic and will acknowledge the great benefit conferred on them at the cost of the whole State. I trust that the Government will give attention to the supply of water to other places as well as the Eastern Goldfields. On the Murchison the good water obtainable at a certain depth is beginning to give out, and the lack of water must certainly retard the progress of the mining in-

dustry in that important district. It is to be hoped that the Government will give prompt and earnest attention to the question of furnishing the Murchison district with a suitable supply of water. We Murchison residents ask that a little scheme, for which we are prepared to pay, should be provided; we are desirous of borrowing the necessary funds from the Government, to be repaid in small amounts until the total shall have been refunded. The reports of the Royal Commission on the Public Service have not, in my opinion, been treated by His Excellency's advisers in a proper manner. Ministers should have been prepared to put definite proposals before Parliament. I trust that the whole question will be seriously treated, and that before the prorogation the Government will make a clear pronouncement as to the steps which will be taken to carry out the recommendations of the commission. Members ought not to be allowed to go to the country next year unable to say what the Government are doing or intend to do in the matter; and the Government ought not to be allowed to make an election cry of it. Ministers may possibly nurse the whole thing and keep everybody in the dark until the general election is upon the country. Farther, I know that many officers fear they will be retrenched, or reduced in salary. The probabilities are that if the Premier and his colleagues do not take a fair and clear stand now, they may make use of this question to capture votes at the forthcoming general election. Such a proceeding would be most unfair to the country. I trust that the Government will, before the prorogation, take courage to proclaim in how far they are prepared to adopt the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The Speech makes reference to the progress of the State as a whole, and I join heartily in the expression of pleasure uttered by His Excellency's advisers in that connection. Every one of our industries—agricultural, mining, pastoral, and pearl-fishing—is prosperous. I regret, however, to have to remark on the presence in our midst of a large number of unemployed. I hope the Government will use every endeavour to provide those men with employment, and I heartily indorse the action of the Government in pushing on the building

of railways and other necessary public works, since by these means the pressure will be relieved. [MEMBER: The unemployed won't work.] Not many of the unemployed are unprepared to work, provided reasonable employment is found for them. An unfortunate feature of the situation is that in this State the workers necessarily make for the large centres, and that therefore the moment work becomes scarce the pressure is severe. However, I trust that the public works I have referred to will relieve the congestion. I regret that no mention is made of an intention on the part of the Government to deal in some way with that complex question, the Midland Railway. The only attempt which has been made to solve the problem is the subsidising of a steamship trading between Fremantle and Geraldton. I regard that as a good move, and as one likely to have the effect of bringing the Midland Railway Company to its bearings. Indeed there is reason to believe that the effect is already making itself felt. One unavoidable feature of the situation, however, is that since the Murchison people will not now use the Midland Railway as much as formerly, residents of such places as Mingenew and Dongara will be put to considerable inconvenience. I understand that even now the Midland Company will have to curtail its service, and from this injury must result to settlers along the line. It is matter for regret that the Government do not strain a point to try and make a deal with the Midland Railway Company for the vast extent of beautiful land between Midland Junction and Mingenew. Still, it is not yet too late; and I trust that the Government, by bringing proper pressure to bear, may be able to effect something before long. Sir Edward Wittenoom referred to the fact that the Government are making a certain concession. That concession relates to the handling of goods sent from Fremantle to inland towns beyond Geraldton. To my mind, the Government are doing only a fair thing; it is necessary to counteract in some way the moves of the Midland Railway Company; and by taking the goods off the boat, loading them on railway trucks, and consigning them inland the Government afford greater encouragement towards the use of the steamer subsidised by the State.

When all is said and done, the concession affects very few people injuriously. At all events, the interests of goldfields residents, who are already heavily taxed, ought to be considered before the interests of a few forwarding agents in Geraldton and Fremantle. As regards education, I admire the noble spirit of the Premier: I admire him for proclaiming that the time has arrived for this State to have something in the shape of a University. I am inclined to believe, however, that the country is hardly yet ripe for incurring the exceedingly heavy expense of absolutely establishing a University. Without entering farther into the matter, I desire just to remind the Government that a great deal remains to be done for the education of young children in various small towns. For a few years, at any rate, we shall have quite enough to do to keep afloat and maintain in a proper manner our elementary schools. Though I have not the slightest desire to throw cold water on the Premier's project, I must say that to establish a University now at heavy expense would be to do something altogether premature. I agree with other members that the University would be patronised only by a few whose parents could well afford to send them to the universities of the sister States.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It is the other way about—the poor would patronise the university of this State, while the rich would send their children to the Eastern universities.

HON. B. C. O'BRIEN: I have pleasure in supporting the motion. I shall not detain the House longer.

At 6:35, the ACTING PRESIDENT left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

HON. W. T. LOTON (East): The Speech submitted to us has been discussed in so many various aspects, that it seems to me very little that is new can be said. There are one or two points on which I wish to say a few words. I have no doubt it is a satisfaction to members generally to notice that His Excellency the Governor is pleased with the reception he has met with in Western Australia. I am sure that would be so in any case, whoever the person may be who

represents His Majesty the King; and although we hear sometimes of rumours and opinions put forward in the direction that persons who occupy this position should be selected and appointed from the States themselves, I have no sympathy with feelings of that kind. The present system is the main link which binds us to the Empire, and I trust it will be a very long time before it is severed, if ever, but that the appointment will be made from the old country, and that we shall thus have continually introduced as the direct representative of the King a person who is a stranger to us and is not connected with any particular section or faction of the particular State in which he represents His Majesty. I am pleased to be able to congratulate the leader of this House on his successful career in gaining that position without opposition, which must have been satisfactory to him. It was rather a bold stroke, but seeing that he had his Government behind him, the Premier practically living in the constituency for which he came forward, and another prominent Minister, the Minister for Railways, very closely connected with another part of the constituency, I suppose he had very little trouble. I do not know whether he is a hard-worker or not—we shall know that during this session—but he looks quite able for work. I trust he will place the business before us in a plain and straightforward way, and as far as I am concerned, and I believe the House generally, he can count upon getting fair and honest consideration. The most prominent clause in His Excellency's Speech, and I think it is the first clause of importance brought to our notice by him, I suppose as the view of his advisers, is this: "The recent movement in the mother country towards securing closer trade relations between the various parts of the Empire has been welcomed in this State with feelings of warm sympathy and with sincere hopes for its ultimate success." Various views have been expressed on this question, and it seems to me that we have not really got the subject before us to talk about. The Secretary of State for the Colonies alluded to these closer relations, and if I have read the papers correctly he intimated that there should be between the old country and the colonies preferential trade relations.

I take it that these preferential trade relations would emanate, at all events the system would emanate, in the first place from the mother country, and it would be what we have talked about for some time—reciprocal trade between England and her colonies. "Reciprocal trade" is a very nice phrase, but if we are to go into the question in any detail at all—I do not propose to go into it in detail—it seems to me, as to the member who moved the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, that it requires very close and cautious examination. It is a very serious position to entirely alter practically the fiscal policy of the old country which has been in existence for over half a century. It is very easy to speak about this preferential trade and reciprocity between England and her colonies; but when you come to talk to the people of the old country and suggest to them that we should levy on them certain protective duties, nothing less than protective duties on food products, the mass of the people who have for years been agitating for free-trade principles will begin to think at once, "How is this going to touch us?" When one proposes to put 2s. to 4s. a quarter on wheat, or 10s. to 15s. a ton on flour approximately, it seems to me that the mass of the people will begin to think that bread is going to cost a little more; and then the question will arise, how they are to be benefited in other ways? I believe Mr. Chamberlain stated that this kind of policy was likely to increase the rate of wages in the old country. I scarcely see exactly how that result is to be brought about. However, bread is only one point. Many other commodities would be affected. It seems to me we are in the dark on the whole subject at present. We have not thought much about the question here, and it has been little thought about in the old country. Now, as regards preferential trade and reciprocity between England and her colonies, what about our close allies, our American cousins? Are they to be treated as foreigners? How is the preferential and reciprocal trade question to come in there, and in other respects? We are on the threshold only of this matter. Personally, I was a little surprised at the remarks of Sir Edward Wittenoom, who is heart and soul with the project before he knows what it is. I

cannot see that any of us have argued the question out. However, after close inquiry by the most practical men to be found, either political or commercial, I shall be quite in favour of discussing the question in the light of the conclusions arrived at. When the investigations have been made and we see what they lead up to, we shall be in a position to discuss the project. I do not desire to say any more on it, except that I am one of those who are desirous of seeing the British Empire built up and supported by the colonies. Indeed, it must be. We must retain and maintain the power we have at the present time; and that cannot be unless the Empire is supported by the colonies. The question will arise, if we draw this ring fence to shut out other countries from competition in trade, whether we shall be strong enough to fight those other countries, not only in matters of trade, but also in other respects. I trust that the question will be seriously thought out, not only in the old country, but in the Australian colonies and elsewhere in the Empire. A good deal is said in the Speech about what I may term, for the sake of brevity, the federal railway, instead of the Trans-continental Railway. The Government of this State appear to be perfectly satisfied that everything in the way of the execution of that work at the present time will be smoothed away; that even South Australia, which is now showing as hostile a spirit as could well be conceived, will give way; that in a quarter less than no time all these little difficulties will be removed and the federal railway will have been completed. Indeed, the Premier went so far as to say that he is willing to pledge this country to guaranteeing that if the federal railway is constructed, Western Australia will indemnify South Australia for the latter's share of any possible loss which may accrue. Now, I think it would take a stronger man than the present Premier of Western Australia to obtain the sanction of Parliament to a pledge of that kind. I trust there are wiser and sounder men in the Western Australian Parliament than to be foolish enough to pledge themselves to a guarantee to meet the liability of contribution falling on any other State than our own. We shall have quite enough to do to carry our own

liability, without guaranteeing what may be an assumed liability on the part of another State. I am not in favour, and never shall be in favour, of the giving of any such guarantee. One thing: although the Premier may make an assertion of that kind, he is, fortunately, not in a position to give it effect without the vote of Parliament behind him.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Of course; that is understood.

HON. W. T. LOTON: The statement seems to me a somewhat rash one. My view in regard to the railway is that it should be a federal railway, built by the Commonwealth at the Commonwealth expense, and maintained by the Commonwealth through contributions *per capita*, without more discussion about it. No question should be raised as to one State contributing a larger proportion of the expense than that contributed by another. I do not see how it is at all possible for South Australia and Western Australia themselves to commence the construction of the railway from their respective ends.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was an alternative.

HON. W. T. LOTON: I do not see how it is possible for those States to undertake the work without the assistance of the Commonwealth.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I hope it will not be necessary.

HON. W. T. LOTON: I do not think it will be necessary; and I believe, or at all events I trust, that no Parliament of Western Australia will be found agreeing to any such proposition, although it has been asserted that we are strong enough to build the railway. I believe that statement was made by Sir John Forrest, who almost said that he would build the line himself. If anyone sufficiently magnanimous can be found, in either Western Australia or South Australia, well and good; but I am afraid neither State has such a citizen at the present time. It is most unfortunate that this collision or conflict should have occurred. Still, I do not think we can find much fault with any particular State, or the politicians or Government of any particular State, for looking after the special interests of that State. Indeed, we may well take a lesson from South Australia in this respect, and henceforth devote

our particular attention to our own particular business, and see that we carry it on for the particular benefit of Western Australian citizens, instead of for the benefit of the citizens of other States. For we may depend on it that the other States will not consider us first and themselves next. They will consider themselves first with regard to everything. That is one of the laws of nature, and we cannot get away from it. It is not to be expected that any State is going to do something for the particular benefit of people outside its borders. I do hope the matter will be settled amicably in the course of time. Personally, I do not think that there is any such special hurry for the building of the railway as some people think; except, perhaps, from the point of view of defence. For any other special purpose there is not, in my opinion, any immediate hurry for the building of the federal railway. Of course, we cannot get over the fact that until we have railway communication with the Eastern States we are, to all intents and purposes, practically isolated from the rest of the Commonwealth. We cannot take the same interest in Commonwealth affairs as we should if this means of communication were afforded. We have not the opportunity. We are under numberless disadvantages. I do think the other States, South Australia included, ought to recognise the disadvantages under which we labour, and ought to remember the promise given before we entered federation, that these disadvantages would be removed. If the federal railway were constructed, development in various directions would, of course, be very much changed. People from the Eastern Goldfields would be able to go across to the other States without the necessity of coming to Perth or Fremantle, and the people coming from the other States to the Eastern Goldfields would be in the same happy position. Unless they desire to come to the city or the chief port of the State, it will not be necessary; and with regard to the payment, I am rather inclined to think there will be a considerable deficiency for some time. As to the rates, I am not inclined to think, as far as I can judge as a layman in the matter, that the revenue would be likely to cover working expenses,

interest and cost. Still I consider that the Federal Parliament, in the interests of the Commonwealth, and particularly in the interests of this State, ought to see its way at the very earliest date to have this railway constructed with a fairly broad gauge. With regard to the construction of a railway on the broad gauge between Fremantle and the goldfields, I do not propose to deal with that question at all at the present time. If it is intended to be dealt with, the matter will be before the House, and we can deal with it then. I think it is a little premature to deal with it now, unless the trade necessitates the duplication of the line. Then it would be a question whether we should duplicate the line on the present gauge or increase the width of the gauge. The probability is that it would be desirable to increase the width in order to make it agree with what would be a through gauge on the federal railway. With regard to the proposed policy of the Government in the extension of certain railways, I am very pleased indeed at the policy they have put forward; that is, to give facilities for the settlement of people upon the various lands of the State in a suitable climate, and where there is a very large area of land fit for fairly close settlement and cultivation. That is one of the main points we should always consider; we should strive as far as possible to get permanent settlement upon the soil, because we have a market on the goldfields. We are nearest to them, and we in Western Australia should supply them. That is one of our chief duties which we should never lose sight of. We should supply the people on the goldfields instead of endeavouring to assist outside States to come and avail themselves of our markets. Of course, in a very short time there will be no duty at all within the Commonwealth. The sliding scale will soon be gone, and a good thing, too, when it is. The Commonwealth of Australia will be open to be supplied by the people of Australia who can supply products at the lowest and cheapest prices. The people then can have no complaint; but it is for each State to see that it supplies people living in the State, and so increase its revenue. We were carried away to a certain extent by this Federation measure a few years

ago, but we should never forget that the Commonwealth has left us to take care of ourselves with regard to our indebtedness. Whatever we have borrowed we have to repay, and we have to continually pay the interest. We should, in my opinion, also carefully look after the particular works we have constructed out of loans, and which are practically reproductive, particularly our railways; but I am one of those who consider it is not in the interests, and will not be in the interests of this State particularly, to hand over the control of our railways to the Federal Government. I am one of the strongest opponents to a measure of that description. It has been mooted a number of times already, and there are a great many people in the largely populated States who are much in favour of it; but whatever we do, let us take care and keep control of our own railways and manage them the best way we can. I shall not deal with any other points in the Speech, for I am sorry to say I am not in a state of health just at the present time to speak much, and we shall have an opportunity, wherever policy is concerned in the Speech, of dealing with that policy when the Bills are brought before us. I will just say I trust that on this particular occasion we shall not have an excessive amount of what I may be allowed to term advanced legislation. I hope the legislation will be practical. If anything, perhaps do away with some Acts that we have, or a few of them, or amend them, and put them into a more workable form. I was omitting to speak with reference to the Electoral Bill and the Constitution Bill. I am rather afraid that not only this Parliament of Western Australia, but sometimes the others, are a little too fond of interfering with the Constitution, and of course in a new and growing State we cannot expect a Constitution formed five or six years ago to be exactly what we require; but it is not well to be always interfering with the base on which we are working. Still, if improvements can be made, and it is clearly shown that they will be improvements or are likely to be, I shall not oppose them. At the same time, I think that the less frequently we deal with these matters the better. With regard to the number of members, we might, I think, do very well with about

24 members in this House; but as to the question of cost, it is a mere bagatelle, and that point should not enter the minds of members at all. The reduction of six members would mean £1,200 a year, and it is nothing. We must remember the immense territory under our care at the present time, and that we are increasing in population, and we also must bear in mind the various interests and industries, all of which need representation. Although we might possibly do with a smaller number of members, I do not see that anything will be gained by it, and on that ground there is no reason at all to alter the Constitution in that direction. It may be necessary to make an alteration in the boundaries, but whatever is done in that respect, I trust the Government will be far-seeing enough not to be led away with the idea of representation of numbers alone, because we know that in various parts of this State, particularly the mining parts, the population is and will be frequently changing. On that account I do not think it would be well and desirable that legislation should take place on a base of that kind. We do not want opposing interests. I trust that the question which sometimes has cropped up in the past, of the mining interest and the coastal interest, has been done away with. I think most people settled on the mines have now been in this country long enough to become Western Australians, and to have Western Australian interests at heart. We want those people who have been successful, and have made money in the country to remain with us. Settle them on the soil or in the towns, or anywhere members like as long as they stop here and spend their money instead of going away. There is plenty of room for all of us. We want more people and more money, and legislation of that kind, instead of tabooing capital and trying to frighten it away as has been done during the past one or two years.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West): I do not intend to address myself at great length to His Excellency's Speech. I desire, in common with all other members who have spoken, to join in the chorus of praise and satisfaction at the appointment of the Colonial Secretary as leader of this House. It appears to me that a great deal of the matter contained in this Speech is introduced simply for the pur-

pose of making a Speech. I am sure the hon. member who has just resumed his seat has expressed his views with regard to the question of preferential trade better than I can. There is nothing before the country at the present time: nothing for us to give an opinion upon. With regard to the secondary schools which are suggested, I also look upon this question as a matter that will need future consideration. The question is not likely to engage the attention of Parliament at the present time. As one who for years past has always given his vote and support to the Coolgardie Water Scheme, I now desire to express my congratulations on its being an accomplished fact, and I think the State has conferred the greatest boon possible upon the settlers on the gold-fields. When they realise that they have been paying from 50s. up to I think £4 for a thousand gallons of water in the past, and can now obtain the same quantity for 7s. 6d., there is little cause to complain, and I do not agree with the sentiment that the work should be regarded as a national one, and that the people who use the water should not be called upon to pay. I think that those who derive direct benefit certainly should pay the very small sum which they are asked to do. The public works suggested by the Government are such as commend themselves to Parliament and the country generally. I quite expected that those works would not have met with one dissentient voice, and to-day I was surprised to hear Mr. Drew speak in condemnation of the Bunbury harbour works. Had the hon. member been at Bunbury during the last few weeks and looked around he would have seen 15 or 16 vessels at a time. I think that the harbour has seldom had less than 15 or 16 vessels for months past, and had he been there he would have formed a different opinion from that which he has expressed. [MEMBER: It takes four months to load.] Only yesterday 14 ships were at the harbour, and three had just completed loading and cleared, so that there were 17 vessels. Surely the trade of that port justifies some expenditure on it. This work is not going to be a burden, but will be reproductive, and it will pay handsomely. I feel satisfied that any member who will go to the wharf at Bunbury at the pre-

sent time and see the unprotected condition of the vessels there will not begrudge the expenditure necessary upon it. I am quite satisfied that unless some improvement is made to the Bunbury harbour, before very long the greatest disaster which has ever happened in Western Australia will occur there. If a north-west gale sets in, there is nothing to prevent vessels from breaking adrift, in which case there would be serious loss of both life and property. This is such an urgent work that the Government would be quite justified in doing what the Colonial Secretary has done to-night; asking for a suspension of the Standing Orders to pass a Bill through. That is what I should like to see done. I should like to see the work commenced next week. I am certain the country would uphold and applaud the action of the Government. My opinion is that when the Bill does come before Parliament, Mr. Drew will find himself voting alone against it. I doubt whether any member in either House would have the presumption to stand up and say the work is not one of the most pressing and necessary in Western Australia at the present time. I am pleased to find the Government are going to introduce new railways. I have missed, for some time past, those hopeful Speeches which we used to get during the tenure of the Forrest Government—new railways, new jetties, and harbour works in all parts of the country. I am pleased to see that something fresh is to be entered upon. The construction of a railway from Collie to the Great Southern line will, I am sure, meet with general approval; even with the approval of the gentlemen from the goldfields, since the railway will not only stimulate the coal mining industry and open up a large extent of agricultural country, but will supply a much-needed facility to the mines. The line from Fremantle to Jandakot will open up an area of land which cannot be described as rich, but which is still productive, and a great deal of which will be taken up. Owing to its close proximity to Perth and Fremantle, the land will be settled. Moreover, the railway will not cost much, and it can be constructed out of general revenue. Now that the Government have taken the matter in hand and realise the necessity for this

branch line, I should like them to carry the extension right through to the South-Western Railway. To use an old phrase, there is no use in making two bites at a cherry. The undertaking is only a small one, as the country to be traversed is level. If the Government intend to continue the Woodmans Point line for a distance of five or six miles, they may just as well go on to the South-Western Railway. The primary object in building the line is to relieve the traffic of the South-Western Railway and to convey coal and timber direct to Fremantle over a shorter route. The cost of carriage is considerably increased by bringing these products through Perth. Moreover, the traffic between Perth and Fremantle needs to be relieved. The line has my entire support, and I think the country is quite justified in building it. Where it shall eventually tap the South-Western Railway is a question calling for careful consideration. No doubt the same agitation will arise as in regard to the Collie line. It has been suggested that the Woodmans Point line should be extended to Armadale, and also that it should branch off at Mundijong. I am not prepared to express any definite opinion as to where it should junction with the South-Western Railway, but it does appear to me that Armadale is too close to Perth. If the junction were effected at Mundijong, the distance to Fremantle would be shortened and a larger extent of new country would be opened up. The matter is one calling for farther consideration. While on the question of railways, I wish to say that I feel strongly the necessity for doing something in the northern part of the State. If we have there the rich and extensive belt of auriferous country which has been represented as existing, and which no doubt does exist, then no work will be of greater benefit to the State in general than will the construction of a railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. I am acquainted with many residents of that country who know every foot of it, and the general impression is that once the northern districts are opened up by a railway, a second Kalgoorlie will be called into being after the lapse of a few years. That would be an immense advantage to this part of the State, since vessels would be employed to carry Collie coal to the



northern fields, where fuel is almost unprocureable, and fresh markets would be created for the producers at this end of the State. If we can get—as I believe we can—private enterprise to undertake the work, then we may well depart from the established system of doing everything by Government. I trust that, before the session closes, some practical, definite proposal will be put before the Government, justifying them in at all events making most careful inquiries as to whether something could not be done in the near future to furnish the North with railway communication. The construction of a broad-gauge line from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie I regard as entirely premature, unless we are assured that the Transcontinental Railway will be built. The laying of a broad-gauge line from the port to the fields would involve the importation of fresh rolling-stock, since our narrow-gauge trucks and carriages would be unavailable for use on a broad-gauge line. In the absence of an assurance that a broad-gauge railway will be built from the Eastern States, the project is, in my opinion, entirely out of the question.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** We should not ask Parliament to do it.

**HON. E. McLARTY:** In regard to the Royal Commission on the Public Service, I feel very much as do hon. members who have already spoken. The reference made by the Speech to that Commission is well worded—"The recommendations will be acted on so far as may be in the interests of the State." If that be done, it means that not much notice will be taken of the Commission's recommendations. I doubt if we shall get a *quid pro quo* for the £6,000 which the commission has already cost the country. We are told that an appreciable reduction is to be made in the cost of the carriage of foodstuffs to the goldfields. I trust this reduction will be effected not only in the case of the goldfields railways, but also in connection with lines serving other parts of the State. There is ample room for a reduction. I feel assured that the users of the railways in this country ought to pay considerably less freight than is being levied at the present time. I do not know whether the intention is that the reduction shall be for the benefit of only one part of the State, or

for the benefit of the whole country. Reverting for a moment to the Royal Commission on the Public Service, I wish to say that I entirely disapprove of the recommendation that small country hospitals should be closed. These hospitals are well worthy the support of the Government. The various small hospitals maintained in districts with a scattered population cost only a few pounds per year, and they are a benefit and a blessing to those injured and ailing who may be unable to proceed to larger centres for treatment. I consider that the money spent on country hospitals is well spent, and represents a legitimate tax on the community. The Fremantle dock is a project of great importance which has been brought up from year to year, but has not made much headway. Nevertheless, its importance is of so vital a nature that I think it well to delay until the country is quite assured of the right place for its construction. Undoubtedly a dock is badly wanted, and although we have been promised it for many years, we seem to have got no farther ahead. I have lately travelled over the Midland Railway, of which we hear so much. While I am quite sure that members who complained of the accommodation some time ago had just reason for so doing, I must say that I found the accommodation on that line just as good as the accommodation provided on the Government railways. I confess, too, that I felt some little sympathy with the Midland Railway Company. A corporation which has spent a large amount of money in constructing a railway hundreds of miles in length, and traversing a vast extent of barren and waterless country, is entitled to some sympathy. I do not know that the country is justified in subsidising a steamer to trade in opposition to the railway. There is already on this coast a good, efficient, and regular steam service. The Singapore boats run fortnightly, and the "Bullarra" runs at regular intervals. In my opinion, those boats afford sufficient accommodation, and it is scarcely necessary to spend a large sum of money on a boat running between Fremantle and Geraldton. Probably other North-West ports will want to know why Geraldton has been so favoured. Geraldton can avail itself of

all the boats trading to ports farther north. Again, many people between Perth and Geraldton will derive no benefit whatever from the steamer service. I am inclined to think, therefore, that this subsidised service might have been done without.

MEMBER: Evidently you have not travelled very often by the Midland Railway.

HON. E. McLARTY: I travelled on the Midland line within the last fortnight, and I found the accommodation as good as that on the Government railways.

MEMBER: Perhaps you had a special carriage.

HON. E. McLARTY: No. I am quite aware, of course, that improvements have recently been made in the Midland Company's accommodation for travellers. Undoubtedly, a great demand exists for land in the Victoria District; and I trust the Government will be able to satisfy that demand. I had no opportunity of visiting the estate which has been referred to; but if the land is as good as it is represented to be, the price at which the estate was offered must certainly be regarded as low, and the Government might well have purchased. Mr. Drew, however, has made comparisons between the Yarragadee Estate at £2 or £3 per acre and Mt. Erin: these comparisons are not at all applicable. The Yarragadee Estate, for its acreage, is one of the best properties in Western Australia, having been selected in the early days in small blocks along the Irwin River. The whole estate consists of good land, and I believe there is not an acre of it but is suitable for wheat growing; whereas Mt. Erin Estate comprises a great deal of country which is very light and unfit for cultivation. Like Sir Edward Wittenoom, I was somewhat surprised at the absence of any allusion to the pastoral industry of this State. I think that such an industry, growing and assuming large proportions, might well have found a place in the Speech. I agree with the various hon. members that the Government ought to do everything possible to open up and improve the stock routes; not altogether in the interest of the pastoralist, but in those of the consumer. The want of stock routes constitutes a great difficulty, and is the main

factor in raising meat to so high a price. The expense of conveying meat from the producing districts to the central markets is exceedingly heavy. The squatters are not getting these very high prices from the station; but the cost of transit and the loss on the way make the meat a very high price before it reaches the consumers. I do not think I have anything farther to say, except to congratulate the Government on the public works policy which they have brought in. I am sure it will meet with general approval, and I trust, in relation to the one work which I have before referred to, the Bunbury Harbour Works, that not a single day will be lost in pressing it on and putting the work in hand with the least possible delay.

On motion by Hon. C. SOMMERS, debate adjourned until the next day.

#### SUPPLY BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly [and dealt with immediately after the interval for dinner].

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Bill be read a first time.

HON. G. RANDELL: Should not the hon. gentleman first move that the debate on the Address-in-Reply be adjourned until after the consideration of the Bill?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It had been ruled in another place that a Bill introduced in consequence of a Message could be taken into consideration at once, without adjourning the debate then in progress. However, he was willing to adopt the course suggested.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: It would be better to postpone the debate until after consideration of the Message.

Debate postponed accordingly.

Bill read a first time; and the Standing Orders having been suspended, the Bill passed through remaining stages.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 8:32 o'clock, until the next day.