

which nature has been most bountiful in its gifts. I hope hon. members on both sides of the House will endeavour to cultivate and develop the natural resources of this country, and by so doing show that they are true patriots of their country, and are endeavouring so far as they can, and consistent with their position as politicians on either side of the House, to develop all the latent resources of this country and make it the foremost among the States of Australia. Since nature has been so kind it will be unkind on our part not to co-operate with its efforts and not to do what we can to develop them. So far as members on this side of the House are concerned—and I think I may speak even more than personally—we are here representing the people with the fixed purpose and intent of developing all the resources in this country for the good of all classes of the community. That will be our object and we trust that all members of the House will assist us towards that end.

On motion by Mr. Mitchell, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.50 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 8th November, 1911.

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

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motions by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Sessional Committees were appointed as follow:—

Standing Orders Committee.—The Hon. the President, the Chairman of Committees, Hon. M. L. Moss, Hon. R. Pennefather, and the mover.

Printing Committee.—The President, Hon. W. Patrick, and the mover.

Library Committee.—The President, Hon. W. Kingsmill, Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett.

House Committee.—The President, Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom, Hon. J. E. Dodd, Hon. A. G. Jenkins, Hon. B. C. O'Brien.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. M. L. Moss, leave of absence for the remainder of the session granted to Hon. F. Connor on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—GAME.

Introduced, on motion by Hon. W. Kingsmill, and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (West): Since the last meeting of Parliament there has been a general election, with the result, which is well known, of a new party having come to power to rule the affairs of this country for the next three years, and as a member of a non-party House I congratulate my friend, Mr. Drew, on having assumed the responsible and onerous position as leader, and his colleague, Mr. Dodd, on having attained Cabinet rank. As a result of by-elections we have amongst us two new members, Mr. Doland and Mr. Davis. They come to this Chamber as direct nominees of the Labour party, and I think these gentlemen, after having had some experience of this Chamber, will easily come to the conclusion that every measure that comes to this Chamber for the consideration of members is dealt with fairly and on its merits, irrespective of the party responsible for its introduction. I congratulate both these gentlemen on having become members of this House. I hope when they have the opportunity of knowing more about the methods and business of this Chamber, instead of being advocates for a reduction of the franchise, with a view

to the ultimate abolition of this Chamber, they will soon become staunch supporters of the bi-cameral system. The policy of one Government and the policy of another Government seem to have very little difference when you analyse them, because I find that the Premier has told us that there is not going to be any slackening off of the policy of immigration; there is to be no stagnation of necessary public works being carried out, and that there is to be no stagnation in connection with the land settlement of the country. I think it will be admitted on all hands that the policy necessary for a young and extensive country like Western Australia is a policy of immigration, public works and land settlement. The question of immigration I put in the forefront of any policy, because I cannot believe Western Australia is sufficiently populated with only 300,000 people; one-third of the Continent of Australia with a mere handful of people in it is not the destination of this country; and the people of Australia, and the people of Western Australia more particularly, will not be doing their duty by the Empire if they do not make super-human efforts to people this State. We shall not be doing our duty to humanity if we consider that we have arrived at the maximum of population of this country with 300,000 people. We know that the great nations of Europe are hungering for territory to put their surplus millions into, and it cannot be that this great continent of Australia will be held by British people and the people of the Commonwealth if we do not do the duty that mankind has thrust on us. We require teeming millions of population in this country, and any Government will be false in that duty to carry out that very important aspect of the policy of directing the efforts of the country in not doing that which is in its best interests. But there is a financial aspect in connection with immigration that no Government can lose sight of. At the present moment the contributions which we receive from the Federal Government consist of a sum of about £250,000 a year, as a special grant to make up for the loss sustained after the ten years period of the Braddon Blot had disappeared from the Federal Consti-

tution Act. I call it Braddon Blot; it was a Braddon blessing so far as Western Australia was concerned, but it is generally known as the Braddon Blot. When that disappeared from the Federal Constitution Act Western Australia was absolutely at the mercy of the Federal Parliament to obtain that which it was justly entitled to, in securing a fair and just proportion of the enormous revenue derived through the Customs House. The position to-day is this. We get 25s. a head for the population of Western Australia as a contribution, together with the special allowance of £250,000. This £250,000 is a disappearing quantity, because every year it is to be reduced by the sum of £10,000. On the assumption that the population of this State is being added to by something like 10,000 souls in round numbers during the last year or two—I do not think I am over-estimating the numbers, probably Mr. Connolly will be able to enlighten the House more specifically on the point than I can—that means an increase of £12,500 in revenue, and to put a barrier on in connection with immigration will be a serious thing, not only from the point of view of not doing the duty imposed on the Government by the people of the State, but it means a very serious loss of revenue. I hope that the Government will keep that steadily in view. I am not one of those who believe that by bringing people into the country we are going to cause an unemployed difficulty. The more people you bring in the greater demand you create for every commodity of living. So long as the Government are careful that we do not get an undue proportion of wasters, and so long as they get the proper class of immigrants, there need be no fear. There is not the slightest doubt that in bringing in thousands of people we are going to get a certain proportion of wasters; that has been the experience in Canada and elsewhere where immigration has been embarked upon on a large scale. But if due care is taken at the other end in getting the right class of immigrant, we can avoid many of the mistakes that have been made elsewhere. I say to the Labour party, and to the Government, that we have nothing to fear from bringing peo-

ple into this country. If the prosperity of the country depends on the smallness of the population, we can pursue that argument to its logical conclusion and say that the country would be more prosperous if it had no population at all. There seems to be a fear that we may bring into the field competitors with artisans, and others, but I say that the more people we bring in the more demand there will be for the produce of artisans, and the greater will be the benefit to property holders and others who have a stake in the country. There is to be no stagnation in the matter of public works we are told, and a policy of immigration must go hand in hand with the policy of public works, because if we are bringing in population we must carry on public works to open up the country for them, and the expenditure on public works provides an avenue of employment for the surplus labour. But let me say that I strongly disapprove of the proposal to create a Public Works Committee, and on this point the public have been considerably enlightened by the arguments appearing in the *West Australian* to-day. That leading article furnishes a considerable amount of information for the public and for public men to think upon. So far as I can see, this proposed Public Works Committee is nothing more or less than a permanent Royal Commission. Assuming that the Committee will number seven, as in New South Wales, and that the remuneration will be on the same lines, this will give to the Government of the day the privilege of practically nominating four additional Cabinet Ministers. For very many years in this House I have been one of the strongest opponents of the appointment of these Royal Commissions, and I have been particularly opposed to them when the personnel comprised members of either House of Parliament. During the nine months Mr. Daglish's Government were in office there were one or two Royal Commissions appointed, and then, and on subsequent occasions when other Governments have appointed these Royal Commissions, I have most strenuously objected. I have always considered that it

is a breach of the Constitution Act for members of Parliament to accept remuneration in this way, and it would be a very serious thing to put into the hands of the Government the power of practically nominating four more Cabinet Ministers. It would be more serious in this State, where we have a small House of 50 members, than it is in New South Wales, where the Lower House consists, I believe, of 100 members. Then again, I want to know what additional advantage the country will derive from the appointment of such a committee over and above the machinery that exists at the present time. To-day the Government decide on the construction of a railway, and it is then referred to an Advisory Committee consisting, I believe, of the Engineer-in-Chief, the Surveyor General, and Mr. Paterson, the manager, of the Agricultural Bank. In those three gentlemen we have three experts; the first deals with the proposal from the engineering point of view, and the second from the surveyor's point of view, and then you have the almost unparalleled experience of Mr. Paterson, who knows this country so well. But even then the final word does not rest with this Advisory Committee, because Parliament has always the power contained in its standing orders to appoint a select committee to report as to whether a particular work should be proceeded with. I admit that in the past this power has not always been exercised in the best interests of the country, but that is the fault of this House and another place. My point is that we have the Minister and our Advisory Committee, composed of men who are entirely independent, and who so far have not led the country astray; we have an additional safeguard in the select committee, and then the matter must pass both Houses of Parliament, and last, but by no means least, we have the Press of the country to throw the search light of public opinion on all proposals. Now we are going to add another wheel to the vehicle, I was almost going to say a fifth wheel, but it is more than that, and Mr. Cullen yesterday clearly indicated the abuses

that have cropped up in connection with the appointment of the committee in New South Wales. There is a further point in the *West Australian* leading article to-day that cannot be too strongly emphasised, namely, that no other part of Australia has thought fit to follow the New South Wales example. Therefore, so far as I can see, it will entail a considerable addition to the cost in connection with these works without any compensating advantage, for it appears from the figures published in the paper this morning that the committee in New South Wales cost in fees and expenses nearly £6,000 last year. In my opinion it is a piece of bad policy on the part of the Government to suggest, or to ask Parliament to agree to any such proposal, and, so far as lies in my power, if that measure comes to this House, I shall endeavour to defeat it. I have not got the slightest complaint against the proposal of the Government to stop unfair speculation in connection with the Crown lands of Western Australia. None of us want to see men illegally holding land and benefiting by so doing. I dare say it is a difficult matter to trace but there has been dummying, to a greater or lesser degree, going on in Western Australia; if that has not been the case, Western Australia, in the settlement of its waste lands, is experiencing something different from what other parts of Australia have experienced. Therefore, I will go the whole length with the Government if legislation is necessary, and, if it is not necessary, I will say nothing and do nothing to prevent the Government carrying out a policy which will stop speculation by illegitimate holders of land. That is one thing, but it is a totally different thing in carrying out that policy to do something which will stop land settlement in Western Australia. My idea of a policy of immigration and public works must also go hand in hand with the settlement of the land, and if the settlement is bona fide it will be the greatest blunder to do anything to arrest its progress. In my humble belief it is a great mistake to take away anything from a man who has heart enough to go into the back country, take

up virgin land and develop it in the interests of himself and the State at large. It is a mistake not to give him the freehold; in fact one inducement to take up this land in undeveloped areas is the promise that the selector will acquire something that will be his very own. I do not believe that a man is going into the back country to develop the land, and put his capital and energy into it, if he knows that at the end of five, ten, or twenty years there is going to be a reassessment and possibly an increase of rent. What is the use of all this waste land in Western Australia unless it is going to be taken up and made reproductive? In the United States in the early days of settlement, when they were trying by every possible means to get people to select the land, vast areas were almost given away, and I believe it would be a good bargain for Western Australia to give away the land in the outback districts, if we knew that the people were bona fide settlers who were going to work it in the best interests of the country. It is the man who takes up land and holds it for illegitimate purposes that Parliament and the Minister should be on the track of, but nothing should be done to interfere with the man who is prepared to take up this waste country and put it to uses which will be beneficial to the country at large. Only the most general statements have been made with regard to the intention of the Minister for Lands as to the refusal to register transfers, but the Government must not forget that a huge sum of money belonging to this country has been invested through the Agricultural Bank in all sorts of securities lawfully created under the Land Act; and if the necessity arises for the bank to realise, are the Government going to take these lands back and hold them for all time, or must they not act as a private mortgagee would, and go into the market and sell to the highest bidder? It is impossible for the Agricultural Bank to finance all these propositions, and we know that all the other banks, besides a multitude of companies and private individuals, are advancing money on the lands of the State. It has been a difficult

thing to induce people to put their money out on the security of conditional purchase lands, and it would be a suicidal policy to do anything that would interfere with the security that this class of investment is afforded. We know that capital is a very shy thing indeed. Amongst some people one has only to talk of capital and they begin to regard it as something dreadful that is going to injure the people. But few people can do without capital, and the people who will most suffer through the sudden putting on of the brake are the working and artisan population. If anything is done in connection with the land laws, which is going to make that class of security looked on sideways by the commercial institutions of the country, it will take a long while to recover the position and restore confidence. I do not believe that the Government can have any intention of doing that which a good many people give them credit for intending, and until we know more of what the Government propose I do not intend to condemn them. The observations I am making are merely observations of warning as to the danger that will lie in any step which will make these securities regarded outside as anything different from proper securities for the investment of capital. According to the Governor's Speech a Bill will come before us for the reduction of salaries of Ministers. I voted against this increase, and I voted against the increase of the payment of members, and I am quite prepared to vote again in the same direction as I did last year. I am quite prepared to vote for the payment of members of Parliament to be reduced to £200 as it was before the general elections, and if Ministers here are satisfied that the former payment is sufficient remuneration for the services they are giving to the country I have no complaint to make. I shall be satisfied to vote with them. I have repeatedly from my place in the House expressed my opinion in respect to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. I was one of the strongest supporters of that measure when it was introduced in this Chamber in 1901, but as a result of the operation of that measure I have fre-

quently in more recent years condemned it as a signal failure, and I stand here and say that I see no reason to alter the opinions I have already expressed about it. That Act was passed with the idea of giving to this community industrial peace. It has not done so. The effect of the Act is this. It is an excellent instrument of oppression in the hands of the worker, but it is a useless piece of legislation in the hands of employers of labour for the purpose of having the awards of the court observed. It is supposed to be a judicial tribunal, but it is a judicial tribunal that can only enforce its judgment in one direction; a judicial tribunal that cannot compel the litigants on both sides to observe its awards, and it is an unfair instrument in the hands of the side on which the advantage lies. When you are dealing with an industry, or with the man who has his capital embarked in an industry it is the easiest thing in the world to compel the observance of the award so far as the master is concerned, because by attacking his property you ensure due observance of the judgment of the court, but when you are dealing with a large number of men in an industry it is an entirely different proposal. I have said before that you want a prison as big as a military barracks to put men in if they do not observe the judgment of the court, and I have also stated that such a course is not desirable. It is too outrageous to suppose that you can take 500 or 1,000 men who may be dissatisfied with their conditions of labour and the remuneration they are getting and hurl them into a prison. That would not be tolerated in a free country such as this is. That is one argument that has led me to come to the conclusion that this legislation is a fallacy. Of recent months we have had two tramway strikes, a strike at Collie, a bricklayers' strike, and a plumbers' strike.

Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister): What would have been the result without the legislation?

Hon. M. L. MOSS: This legislation has been passed with the object of preventing strikes, and my argument is that

it has not done so. My point is that when you are dealing with the masters on the one hand you can enforce obedience against them, but on the other, looking at it as reasonable beings, we must come to the conclusion that men are not observing the awards of the court; not only that, but they are not observing the spirit of the Act. For this reason, it is not lawful for men to strike. The men's duty under this legislation is to go to the tribunal which is provided, and get the dispute settled, and holding the strong views that I do, knowing as every hon. member knows, the facts as related are absolutely true, if an honest expression of opinion is given with regard to this legislation it must be admitted that in its operation it has signally failed as regards the great body of workers who are dissatisfied either with the awards of the court or with the conditions of labour under which they are working. We heard during the elections a tremendous amount about the high cost of living. There is no doubt about the fact that it is high; but what brings that about? It is quite impossible for the cost of living to go down while the rate of wages in every industry is increasing. If you increase the cost of production everything else has to respond. I am not saying that men should not get good wages. I want to see men get well paid. It is not to the advantage of any community that any industry should exist which does not enable the worker and his wife and family to live in reasonable comfort. If an industry will not do that in Western Australia we are better without it. We have to be logical and reasonable as to the increase in cost of living, and if wages are mounting up the whole time the question is, is it to the benefit of the worker that he gets 12s. per day for what he previously got 10s., when the spending power of that 12s. to-day is no greater than the spending power of the 10s. was a few years ago. When I say the cost of living is responsible for the increase in the wages paid in the industries throughout the State, I do not want to be misinterpreted; I do not want it to be understood that I am in favour of low wages. One thing is the corollary of the other. You increase wages and you

increase the cost of production. It is grossly unfair to put that to the door of this or the preceding or any other Government. The people at large do it and the people at large must expect the logical consequence of their action when they ask for increased pay. Western Australia in common with other States was called upon to vote upon several questions submitted by the Federal Parliament to the people, and I was one of those who endeavoured to defeat the proposals of the Federal Government. I said during that campaign, and I say now, and I make the statement in all friendliness to the Government, because I have patriotic feelings with regard to this State, that I do not want to see the Parliament of Western Australia denuded of more of its powers than is necessary. I believe, however, that in the interests of Australia, the anti-trust legislation that applies in the States to-day, should be enforced within each State. There are two ways of doing that. The States as a whole may voluntarily surrender their powers to the Federal Parliament, or better still the West Australian or other State Parliaments have the power to enact the laws imposed for interstate transactions relating to trusts, combines, or monopolies. I hope the Government will deal with the question, if not this session then next session, so as to prevent any future admission being made in the Federal Parliament that this obligation, which in my opinion rests upon Parliament, is not being carried out. If the Government will come down with legislation of that kind it will be my privilege and pleasure to support them and get it put on the statute book. I am going to trouble the House a few minutes with regard to some figures which I would not have quoted but for a very unjust, and I think a very ungenerous remark or series of observations, made by Mr. Brimage when he was seconding the Address-in-reply. Mr. Brimage stated that Mr. Gregory, the ex-Minister for Mines, had done very little for the mining industry, and it had been a difficult matter for Mr. Gregory during his election campaign to point to anything during the last three years that he has done for that industry. In the observations that I am going to make

I do not want to detract from what the mining industry has done for Western Australia.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: You know very little about it.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I am going to show the hon. member that he knew nothing about it when he made the observations, or if he did I shall ask hon. members to draw the conclusion as to whether his remarks were just to Mr. Gregory or whether he was simply indulging in generalities. But when I come to bedrock presently I think the country will be satisfied that very unjust observations were made against the late Minister for Mines. I do not want to detract from what the mining industry has done for the country, because I lived in Western Australia before the discovery of the Eastern Goldfields, and we all know the wonderful transformation that took place after the discovery of gold. I am one of those who hope we have not yet achieved all that we shall achieve in connection with the great mining industry of Western Australia, because one or two discoveries such as we have had on the Eastern goldfields will make a marvellous difference in that turn of the wheel in Western Australia. But history is only repeating itself in this country. The gold yield has decreased, and what the country requires in order to make that industry buoyant are fresh discoveries. Until they can be made, the industry under ordinary circumstances will languish, because with the agricultural and pastoral industries given good seasons you can cut your crop or grow your sheep, but when you take gold out of a mining lease it does not grow again, and the only thing for the country, therefore, is to make fresh discoveries with the object of keeping up the production to what it has been in years past. During the last ten years there has been a vote annually before Parliament known as the Mines Development Vote, and that vote has been somewhere in the vicinity of £50,000 a year. For nine out of those ten years Mr. Gregory has been responsible for the expenditure of that vote. Now the total expenditure in connection with water supply for tracks—and mark

you, this is irrespective altogether of the money expended on the great Coolgardie Water Scheme—the total expenditure on water supply for tracks has been £922,000.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is to be hoped the hon. member will give us the figures of the revenue derived from the gold-fields.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I will give it all in good time. The working expenses in connection with the water supplies, apart from that £922,000, over nine years has been £138,000, and the revenue derived £92,000 or a loss—when I say a loss to the country I only mean a loss on the figures; because I, and the House, must admit that this expenditure has been productive of some good to the industry—a loss of £46,000 and this, too, without allowing one solitary penny for interest or sinking fund.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: You might set against that the amount derived from the big mines by way of income tax, namely, £80,000 per year.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I will give the hon. member all that. But this expenditure has been in no way for the purpose of assisting these big mines. The assistance they get is from the expenditure the State undertook in connection with the big Coolgardie Water Scheme. These, I submit, are all items which may be justly claimed as expenditure of money to assist the mining industry in its pioneering stages. Now, during the period for which Mr. Gregory was responsible for the administration of this mines development vote, there were sunk 97,000 feet or 18½ miles of bores for water; there were water shafts for 18,000ft. or an equivalent of 3¾ miles, and there were bore wells of 3,750ft. which were only for the purpose of providing water for prospectors in outback districts. There was diamond drilling of 21,000ft. or an equivalent of 4 miles and tracks were cleared aggregating 900 miles, while dams were built with a holding capacity of 100 million gallons of water. Then there is the system of State batteries built up by Mr. Gregory, which shows a loss on the figures of £30,000 to the State, and that

without a penny of interest or sinking fund being taken into account; and for the purpose of these State batteries £200,000 came out of Loan Fund. I think it is a fair thing to affirm that if it had not been for the State battery system a number of places existing to-day would never have been heard of. Here is a piece of policy. By a regulation made in 1906 the miner was enabled under his miner's right to take up a prospecting area of 18 acres at the sum of 10s. per year. There are 15,000 acres held to-day, I am told, under this particular method of holding land, and the loss to the revenue as against what would have been paid if the land were held under other conditions, means £15,000 per year. Then there is the establishment of the School of Mines to the credit of the late Minister for Mines. Has that done nothing for the industry? There is another system of providing water in places where there are small mining camps, and in connection with which the water supply I have already referred to will not serve. Dams have been made or wells sunk and equipped with windmills, and at these mining camps these water supplies and windmills have been turned over to the people without cost at all. I am told that this method of water supply has been the means of keeping these small places going. The State has been lately through a particularly trying period, although the less we say about that the better. Too much has already been made of it, because what is said of it does not stop here, but goes to the Eastern States and to England, where it does a lot of harm. Still, when one comes to think of it, one bad season in 25 years is not a discreditable record. But my observations apply to country a long way removed from any agricultural proposition. Even last year I understand the mines development vote was exceeded by £10,000 for the purpose of providing water north and south of Southern Cross. Camels were used for transporting water to these places, while 25,000 gallons were drawn from the Coolgardie Water Supply and taken to Menzies by train, and

sold there by the thousand gallons. Special provision for water supplies was made at Norseman and at Phillips River. Recently diamond drilling was carried on at a place called Volunteer Flat, near Cue. Now here is a remarkable instance of the foresight of the Minister. In respect to a place called Yonanme, the Government geologist reported that it was a worthless district, and that to erect a mill there would be a waste of money. Two and a half years ago Mr. Gregory, accompanied by Mr. Troy, visited the district, and in consequence of this personal inspection Mr. Gregory erected a battery out of this vote. To-day the results have amply justified what was done. Splendid reports have come in from that district down to 300 feet. There are some excellent mines and shows there. One big company employs hundreds of men, and large quantities of machinery are on the road for it. Altogether it is a most promising district. I might tell the House something of the North Star Mine at Malcolm, something as to the Minister's advance in connection with that. It was an old abandoned shaft, and Mr. Gregory induced the local people to form a company, undertaking to provide £1,000 out of the mines development vote conditionally on their collecting £700 locally. That £1,000 was afterwards increased to £1,500, and the mine has turned out thousands of pounds worth of gold, while it is the sole employer of labour in that district, if we except the Richmond Gem. I am told that none of that money has yet been repaid, but that the mine is so prosperous and is being worked on such satisfactory lines that the State will not lose a single sixpence on the transaction. I could enlighten the House in respect to a mine in which Mr. Brimage is concerned, the Richmond Gem, but I will not do so, nor shall I say anything of the money which has been spent there.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: It was not provided by the Government.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I might also enlighten the House in regard to a certain engine-driver's certificate in which Mr. Brimage was interested, and in respect to which Mr. Gregory got himself into a

good deal of hot water by obliging the hon. member. However, I will not go into these details. But in justice to Mr. Gregory I would like to say that Mr. Brimage is one of those who on the floor of the House said that anybody would be a traitor who opposed the building of the Bullfinch railway.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: I never said anything of the sort. The hon. member has insinuated that I am one of those who attacked the late Government for building the railway.

The PRESIDENT: I think you hear very imperfectly; you should sit nearer to the speaker.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: The hon. member interrupted me too soon. What I was going to say was that when the Bill authorising the construction of the Bullfinch railway was before Parliament the hon. member was one of its strongest supporters, and he said that anybody who opposed the line would be a traitor to the best interests of his country and the industry. At least, that was the purport of his remarks. But that line cost £33,000, and then there was the pipe line put down to take water to the Bullfinch.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: They charged so much per pint for water.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I would not care if they charged so much per teaspoonful. I am not complaining. Unfortunately it has not turned out as well as had been anticipated, but I am trying to let the hon. member see that he was loud in his commendation of the late Minister over the proposed development of the district, although for some reason Mr. Brimage has since turned round. I am not going to weary the House in regard to what has been done under this mines development vote more than to say that seeing I knew but little about the matter I have given a good many details to justify what I stated at the outset, namely, that Mr. Brimage had attacked a man who is outside the House and who has held a high public position in the State, that it was an ungenerous attack, and this I think I have proved to the House. At all events I have not spoken without some information with which to enlighten hon.

members, and that is more than I can say of the hon. member when he made his attack.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: It was perfectly justified.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: If I were to make an attack it would be by way of saying, "You could have done this or that, but you have done nothing." So far from this being the case in Mr. Gregory's instance his successor in the position of Minister for Mines has a difficult task before him. Here is a languishing industry to-day, with a decreasing population and a decreasing gold yield. He says he is going to do what he can for that industry. Everybody, whether inside or outside the House, must support the Minister for Mines for the time being in a policy of endeavouring to prospect this country. It has not yet been done, and it requires hundreds of thousands of pounds to do it. But Mr. Collier has a difficult position before him. If he were prepared to break his heart at the present moment in an endeavour to find avenues for the legitimate expenditure of money under that mining development vote in endeavouring to put that industry on a better footing than it is to-day, it would be a difficult, not to say impossible, matter for him to do more than Mr. Gregory has done. Some of us who are not too kindly disposed towards the fields might have occasion to complain of the huge expenditure that has taken place in that connection; but there never has been a word of complaint, and I hope there never will be. So much does the future prosperity of the country depend upon a big mineral development that agricultural development is a mere bagatelle as compared to the results to be obtained from a rich mineral development. I hope the Government will never hear a word of objection so far as I am concerned, and I do not think there will be a word of objection from a solitary member of the House if the greatest efforts be put forward.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Would it not be right to also set against that huge expenditure the huge revenue derived year by year from the goldfields?

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I have never been here with the object of trying to set the goldfields against coast or coast against goldfields. They are all a part of the great State of Western Australia; and what I want to see is the people of the two communities living in friendship and amicably with one another. Of course, there has been a huge expenditure in this part of the State. I have not quoted any figures with the idea of showing how much has been done for the goldfields. There is no charity about the thing whatsoever. It was a business proposition for the State. The idea of those responsible for this big expenditure—though they carefully scrutinised it—had only one object, to do something for the industry and put it on the footing it had in its more prosperous years, and to make it better if it were possible. One of the great national works which will concern this Government during the time it will hold office will be the extension of the harbour accommodation at Fremantle. This question was discussed on every platform during the election, at any rate in Fremantle where there are three Government supporters returned. There is a difference of opinion as to whether this extension should be outside the river or inside the river.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Or both?

Hon. M. L. MOSS: Yes; or both. But one thing is obvious. It is the bounden duty of the Government to keep somewhat in advance of the State's requirements and to look a little ahead of its developments, also to look beyond Australia and see what is taking place elsewhere. I remarked outside this Chamber what is well known, that the directors of the Suez Canal are deepening that waterway another four feet; and that while Sydney was the great harbour on the eastern side of Australia, Fremantle was the great harbour on the western side; also that boats of 12,000 tons or thereabouts now coming into Fremantle harbour would be small craft compared with the boats that in three or four years would come through the Suez Canal. The additional expense of working a boat of 20,000 tons compared with the extra

carrying capacity over and above a boat of 12,000 tons is very small compared with the increased amount of earnings that boat can give to its owners. We know ship-building is proceeding apace, and boats are not getting smaller but are getting larger, and moreover this country is opening up at a rapid rate. Last year 60,000 to 70,000 tons of wheat were exported from Fremantle, and with the further opening up of this country there will be a much greater export within the next three or four years, and the harbour at Fremantle will be incapable of performing the task allotted to it. When this work of such great magnitude was undertaken, all those people connected with the idea of constructing that harbour within the river and connected with the huge expenditure it meant at a time when there were only 60,000 people in Western Australia, had greater confidence in Western Australia certainly than I and a good many other people had; but as it has turned out, the time has now arrived when the question of its extension has to be seriously considered. These are the last figures I propose to quote, and I quote them because they are not in any Parliamentary paper at the present time, as I got them myself from the secretary of the Harbour Trust. The work to date has been one of the best paying propositions the Government have entered on. Its capital cost is £1,477,500, and the revenue for the last financial year ending 30th June, 1911, was a record revenue, amounting to £96,801, not including the harbour improvement rate of 6d. which I will speak of in a moment. The figures for the preceding year were £75,253, or an increase in net revenue of £21,584 for the year. This shows how the trade of the port is increasing by leaps and bounds. When Parliament authorised the construction of the dock at Fremantle the Fremantle Harbour Trust Act was amended so that the Commissioners could be compelled by the Governor-in-Council to strike a harbour improvement rate to meet interest and sinking fund on the expenditure in connection with the dock, so that it would not be a burden on the consolidated revenue in any respect. That

rate produced the sum of £12,000 a year, and there is £20,155 in reserve in the Treasury to-day as a result of the income from the harbour improvement rate, so that the dock up to date has been no burden on the consolidated revenue. Let me tell hon. members what those figures mean so far as that work paying its way is concerned. On the £1,477,500 the earnings of the harbour pay $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest and one per cent. sinking fund, also £2,000 per year to a special fund for the replacement of work that may get worn out; and last year, the financial year ending the 30th June, 1911, on top of all this it returned to the Treasury £30,315. Again, there is £20,155 at the Treasury to the credit of the construction of the dock. As to the dock, the secretary of the Harbour Trust tells me the position is roughly to-day: the site of the present section has been dredged 800 feet by 150 feet by 47 feet deep, and steel sheet piling has been put over a large portion of the area. It is divided into sections and pumps are already erected and will be ready in a month to pump out the sections so that the work of putting in the floor may be proceeded with. The depth of the sill of the dock will be 34 feet below water. Sufficient depth has been allowed on that sill to take in boats of much greater draught than are coming to Fremantle now. It is a wise provision. Undoubtedly these boats will be of greater magnitude than they are to-day. I am not going to express my opinion as to whether the extension of the harbour is to be inside or outside the river; because I do not want Mr. Brimage telling me I am talking about something I know nothing about. He would be quite correct. It is a matter for expert opinion; and the best expert opinion outside of political opinion ought to be obtained. It ought not to be decided by politicians. It may be that it is to be up the river. If that is the judgment, then I hope the river will not be utilised further than Rocky Bay.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Hear, hear!

Hon. M. L. MOSS: It is obvious that the high land on the bank of the Swan river at Rocky Bay will make a most ex-

cellent site for the bringing of wheat from the back country to places where it can be gravitated into the holds of the boats. I suppose what I am about to say will incur the displeasure of a number of my constituents, but I must say it. I believe that if an attempt is made to concentrate the whole of the shipping west of the bridges at Fremantle it will throttle Fremantle in the attempt. It is obvious that many of those sites as far as Rocky Bay will have to be utilised as factory sites where raw material can be brought and handled at the least possible expense and sent away, water-borne, with the least possible handling and at the least possible expense also. No doubt the scheme of the Federal Government to cut through the Success Bank and make an Admiralty harbour in Cockburn Sound is an exceedingly good one; but if our Government are going to allow congestion to arise at Fremantle while waiting until the Federal work is done, they will act against the best interests of the country. I am not satisfied that it is altogether too good a policy to get too near to the foundations of those bridges. I look with a great amount of suspicion on what is going on there now. They are dredging close up to those piles. Hundreds of tons of material have been put in round their foundations. I do not want to be called an alarmist, but if they get too close to those foundations there must be some terrible calamity on the trains passing over those bridges. I drew the attention of the late Government to this, and they assured me that within the last eighteen months 40 per cent. of the piles of the bridges have been re-driven; but I am also told by people who know something of what they are talking about that when these piles are taken out they are as soft as sponge. I am not going to get too close to those foundations. Again this is a matter for expert opinion, but I beg the Government not to postpone this as a matter that can be turned down and dealt with at a later date. It is already a burning question and an important question to the development of this country. Now, having said so much, let me say that, so far as the Government are concerned, it

is my duty here, as it has been in many previous sessions, when Mr. Connolly was representative of another party in power, to criticise the measures sent to us. I was not in any way one of the most docile members Mr. Connolly had to deal with. Because I did not approve of the measures that were brought here, though I sometimes stood by myself in opposition to them, I always thought it my duty to express my opinion and give my reason why I held my particular views. The late Government I consider had as fair support as they had a right to expect from me, and I propose to be actuated by the same motives with regard to the party now in power. I do not say I am prepared to swallow any revolutionary measure that may come to the Chamber. As I said before, there are two members recently returned who will have the opportunity of seeing how we behave ourselves with regard to the Government policy and measures and with regard to the government of the country as a whole. Mr. Drew and his colleague, Mr. Dodd, may expect to receive from me a fair and legitimate support on that which I think is in the best interests of the country. They are entitled to expect that from me; they cannot want any more, and they cannot expect anything less, and I am sure that is the policy actuating every member of the Chamber. It is a matter of no consequence to me, while I am performing my duty in this Chamber, what Government is in power, so long as it is actuated by the highest motives that can actuate any one to do his duty to the people in Western Australia, and so long as it strives in every way to increase the prosperity and welfare of the State.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East) : Let me offer my hearty congratulations to the new leader of the House and his colleague. I offer these congratulations in all sincerity although I am the late leader of the House. It is a non-party House, as Mr. Moss very correctly remarked, and let us all earnestly hope it will always remain such. Certainly on my part I will do nothing that will alter that position. Any support that I can give to the leader of the

House I will readily give. Of course he will understand that does not mean I will support him in every particular, but everything that I think is in the interests of the country, whether it be termed Labour legislation or Liberal—independent of what name it bears, it will have my support. I give that support to the present leader of the House more readily although Mr. Drew practically belonged to the party which opposed the Government of which I was a member, and although I received criticism from him I always looked upon it as fair criticism. And when opposition came from him it was honest opposition. I give him credit for this that, during the six sessions that I led the House he did not in any way seek to hamper me, indeed I received assistance from him such as I did not receive from other members who did not acknowledge he belonged to the party of which the Colonial Secretary is a member. As Mr. Drew has taken up the portfolio I had the honour to hold for five and a half years, as I informed him personally, I shall be pleased to give him any advice and support and assistance he may ask, because we are a non-party body here, and naturally after holding that portfolio for 5½ years one takes a great interest in a department, and my interests are greater in that department and the State than they are to see the Colonial Secretary inconvenienced in any way. I do not intend to say much on the Speech or what is contained in it. I shall have a little to say later on in regard to some matters that I regret to see are not contained in that Speech. I regret very much the drought in the eastern districts is referred to no less than three times in the Governor's Speech. It is bad policy on the part of the Government to widely advertise what is really a miniature drought compared with what we know of droughts in Australia. As has been remarked by the member who has just sat down, this is not a speech which is only read to members of this Parliament, or merely read in this country. The contents of it, the day after it is read, are cabled to the English newspapers and all over Australia, therefore

it is much to be deprecated that mention was made of this so-called drought, which after all is a very small matter indeed, for it is not a drought. I notice with pleasure mention is made of the Transcontinental Railway. It is well known the Government of which I had the honour to be a member had that work very much at heart, and we did all that could be reasonably expected to forward that work. There has been some mention in the Press in regard to the route of that railway. Some letters have appeared in the daily papers urging that the line should not follow the present Kalgoorlie-Perth railway route. This expression of opinion I agree with to a certain extent. One expression of opinion I saw in the daily papers was that the line should branch from the South-Western line at about Armadale, going through country at present not opened up, on to Brookton or Beverley. That far the line would follow the route over which the late Government proposed to build a railway, and which was announced by the late Premier in his policy speech. Then, the suggestion was, that the line should go on from Brookton due east through Norseman, and that is where I differ from the opinion expressed by the writer of the letter. He advocates that after the line reached Brookton it should travel due East to Norseman, and then on to Port Augusta. I totally disagree with that because no good purpose can be served by running the line from Brookton direct to Norseman. There is nothing to recommend it going to Norseman and not Kalgoorlie. Kalgoorlie is the capital of the goldfields, and that railway should go through the capital of the goldfields. There is nothing to recommend the line going to Norseman, because Norseman from a pastoral point of view is as dry as Kalgoorlie, and from a mining point of view there is no comparison whatever. I certainly think the suggestion is one that merits consideration, whether the line should not branch off at Armadale, going through what is called the Dale River country to Brookton and on to the Eastern Goldfields railway, joining the latter line, say, at Merredin. It would have this

merit: it would save the building of two parallel lines. I am not an expert in railway matters but I should think an inner rail could be put in for our own State railways if it was found better to work the goods traffic with the 3ft. 6in. rolling-stock. It will shorten the distance I think by some thirty miles, I am speaking from memory. But the great point about it is that it will open up new country, and if it does not shorten the distance the line will certainly be no longer, and will save the cost of the narrow gauge line which will certainly have to be put in through that country as already promised by the late Government. Again it has another merit; it will be a much cheaper way of getting over the Darling Ranges than where the Eastern line crosses at present, which is the most expensive point on the ranges to cross. In crossing the Darling Ranges it will be necessary to have a completely new line, and further North as you get to Southern Cross possibly a broad gauge could be made of the present line, but information goes to show that in heavy country there will certainly have to be a new line. I notice with pleasure it is the intention of the Government to do what they can to further the mining industry. I quite agree with the member who has just spoken, that the present Minister for Mines has indeed a very hard task before him. It must be known to a great many of the present Ministry, as several represent mining districts, that Mr. Gregory, my late colleague, who was Minister for Mines for nine years, did all that was possible for any Minister to do for the mining industry. If ever there was a man who devoted his time to the task of developing the mining industry I think Mr. Gregory was that man. I certainly agree with Mr. Moss and I should have had more to say about it had it not been for the remarks made by Mr. Moss, in regard to the very unfair and ungenerous remarks made by Mr. Brimage in seconding the Address-in-reply. Those remarks were certainly most unfair and most ungenerous. I say ungenerous because the hon. member knew they were not correct. The late Minister for Mines, Mr. Gregory,

devoted himself heart and soul to his department, and the goldfields—I say without fear of contradiction—would not occupy the position they do to-day if it were not for the energy and ability displayed by the late Minister for Mines. I sympathise with Mr. Collier, the present Minister for Mines, in the task he has undertaken. It is no easy task. The trouble is that gold mining is declining at the present time. I will not say declining, but the yield of gold has declined. Capital is not coming in to develop the mines. Undoubtedly we should have dozens of other mines opened up in Western Australia if we had the capital to develop them, but unfortunately capital is not coming in. It devolves upon the Government to try and lift the mining industry along. I assume members it is a hard task indeed to know what to do for the mining industry, and anything I can do to assist the present Minister for Mines will be gladly done, because we are all alike in wishing to see the mining industry go along and prosper, and the present Minister for Mines will require all the assistance he can get in order to do more than has already been done by the late Minister for Mines, Mr. Gregory. I also regret, as a goldfields representative, that no mention was made of the goldfields railway which the Advisory Board have recommended—the line from Southern Cross to Marvel Loch. If the Government had been anxious to do something for the goldfields, and the avenues are few, then they would have, at least one would have thought, availed themselves of this one avenue by mentioning this particular railway which has been recommended by the Advisory Board. I trust before the session closes we shall see a Bill brought down for the construction of that railway. I regret, in common with the last speaker, that the Government have not been more explicit in regard to the land laws which they intend to introduce. We heard a great deal during the general elections and it was prominently put forward by the Government that the alienation of Crown lands was to cease; that there were to be no more freeholds, that all lands were to be leased. I trust the Government will seriously consider that matter before

bringing in such far-reaching legislation as that. During the elections numerous arguments were used as to leaseholds *versus* freeholds, and one of the strangest I heard was that coming from a leading member of the Labour party, who held up Ireland as an evidence in favour of leasehold. True, I was not born in Ireland, but I am certainly a descendant of the Irish race and I have visited Ireland, but of all men in the world I cannot understand an Irishman advocating a leasehold to a freehold. The gentleman I have referred to went on to say that the Imperial Government had spent £100,000,000 to buy the land from the landlords, so as to nationalise it. The Imperial Government have spent a large amount of money in buying the land from the landlords, not to nationalise it, but to give the present occupiers an opportunity of obtaining the freehold. Having visited Ireland, if I had not believed in freehold before I should now. One has only to be in Ireland for one day and one will soon become convinced of the wisdom of freehold. I saw there farms which had been neglected. People would not take the trouble to look after them. They had little or no interest in their own holdings because, as they remarked, why should they build up a nice holding for the landlord to come along at the end of five years or ten years, or even at the end of one year and raise the rent. But the Imperial Government bought the land from the landlords and sold it to the leaseholders on twenty or thirty years' terms, similar to our conditional purchase system here. The Imperial Government saw the stupidity of trying to build up a country on leaseholds, and if the Government attempt the same thing here they will soon see the same thing come about in Western Australia. In regard to the reduction of the salaries of Ministers and certain Parliamentary officials, I will not say anything on that matter at the present time, as a Bill will have to be introduced for the purpose. Mr. Moss has made some remarks on that subject but I shall have something to say on the question when the Bill is introduced. I notice that a measure is in course of preparation providing for the

betterment of the conditions prevailing in the public service and the granting of equal political rights to all civil servants. I am at a loss to know exactly the meaning of this. To-day the civil servants have all the rights and privileges of any other citizens, so far as voting is concerned; they are certainly prohibited, and rightly so, from going on the platform and taking part in party politics. It would be a very peculiar state of affairs if a Government official went out of his Minister's department in the evening at election time and criticised the very work his Minister and his superior officers had been doing all day, it may be the very work the official had been doing under the direction of his Minister. I think that would be a pitiful state of affairs and one that I trust will never be brought about. I think civil servants get all the political liberties they have the right to expect. Would a private employer allow his officers, or employees, to go out in the evening on a public platform and criticise his mode of carrying on business? But that is exactly the position in which we are asked to place civil servants. I do not know whether this is intended to cover certain disciplinary portions of the public service, such as the warders of the gaols, and more particularly the police. It would be bad enough in all conscience if the ordinary civil servant were to be allowed to do this; but if a disciplinary force like the police were allowed to do it, I think it would be good-bye to law and order. The police come under the control of the Colonial Secretary; and in that respect I regret very much indeed, speaking from newspaper reports, that when a deputation from the police waited on the Colonial Secretary the other day with regard to an increase of pay, in answer to one of their requests, not touching on pay for a moment, the Minister agreed that they should be allowed to form a union. I think that is a great mistake. The police as a body ought not to be allowed to form an association or union. There is no need for it. Would we allow soldiers to form a union to go on strike? Would we allow the navy to do so? Then why allow the police? I

can anticipate what the Colonial Secretary will say in reply, that it is an association; but we know that all the trade unions and associations of the past are now political labour unions; and as soon as this is formed it will become a political labour union, as the Civil Service Association has become to-day. I say, and I know it to be so, that there are numerous members of the police force to-day who have strong political views, so strong indeed that it is hard to get them to do their duty at certain times. Now, if they are allowed to form a union, the result will be disastrous. We will have a policeman conferring with the secretary of the union before he obeys the order of his superior officers. In that respect also I think it was a great mistake—by the way that deputation was partly arranged before I went out of office—it was a great mistake for the Minister to have allowed officers to accompany the deputation. The officers should stand apart from the ordinary policeman. That he allowed a sergeant to be spokesman at that particular deputation was a great mistake. Now, in regard to police pay, we have heard a great deal lately during the elections as to the smallness of the police pay. It is frequently asserted that the police are paid 6s. 6d. a day. No policeman is paid as low as 6s. 6d. a day. There are always a few men—I believe they number five now, but during my time there were seldom more than two—who are recruits; but they only act as recruits for periods not longer than six months, generally two months, and then they join the police force. When they are recruits they receive 6s. 6d. a day for seven days a week, and lodging allowance; they are given the barracks to live in. The policeman, however, is not badly paid. He joins as a recruit but may be immediately passed into the force. He may be a recruit for a month only, and immediately he joins the force he receives £3 6s. a week and three weeks' holiday per annum on full pay, and he gets medical attention and other privileges. I shall have to say something about these perquisites later; but after he has been five years in the force, if he is a married man, he draws £3 9s.

6d. a week; and after he has been 10 years in the force, if he has not received promotion to be a corporal or sergeant and if he is a married man, he gets £3 16s. 6d. a week; and there are other privileges. That is in the metropolitan area. In the country, however, he gets district allowances of from 8s. to 25s. a week in addition to the pay mentioned. So the ordinary Kalgoorlie policeman who has been five years in the police force receives equal to about £4 3s. a week, also three weeks' holiday on full pay and excursion rates, though he generally travels free, because he usually takes a prisoner down to Perth, or something of the kind; also he receives medical attention. But that is not all the police receive. I know several constables who are receiving, in addition to the amount I have stated, up to £100 a year as clerks of courts and in the shape of bailiff fees and such like. The police also get an allowance for the collection of Federal and State electoral rolls, the census, also statistics, agricultural and otherwise. It may be necessary to give some of the police constables who do not participate in the latter allowances an increased rate of pay. Instead of allowing them to receive 7s. 6d., 8s. 6d., 9s. and 10s. a day, they could be put all on the same footing, and there would be more contentment in the force. They receive payment for work for other departments, which does not appear on the police pay sheets. They get fees as bailiffs from the Law Department; and in at least one instance I can give these fees amounted to over £75 in one year. Then some get an allowance as lockup keepers, while their wives act as matrons, and some get an allowance as gaol lockup keepers, and they get mileage for serving processes; also they get allowances as clerks of court. In the country every policeman can supplement his income by a good amount. The police are not badly paid; and as head of the department for a number of years, I take this opportunity of showing it in justice to myself. The leader of the House knows that during the time I administered the department I gave increased allowances and pay to some of the police constables.

Within the last two years some have got as high as 1s. 6d., some 1s. and all, at least 6d. per day increased pay; and corporals, sergeants and detectives have got more. The increases amounted, roughly speaking, to about £3,000 per annum. Later on, at the beginning of this financial year, there was a further increase of lodging allowance to £9 for married men, and an increased district allowance, which increases amounted to over £2,500. The two increases they have received in the past two years have amounted to between £5,000 and £6,000; and leaving out the last increase of £2,500 the cost of the department last year was nevertheless £11,000 less than what it cost when I took control, notwithstanding that the police had increased pay and increased allowances amounting to over £2,000. I make these few remarks on this department in justice to myself. I was going to say it was not what was in the Speech, it was what was left out that concerned me. I see that little matters such as site for the University, a sanatorium for consumptives and a maternity home are mentioned. The question of the site for the sanatorium was practically decided by me after looking at a good many sites. The same applies to the maternity home. A very liberal grant was made for that some time ago. I regret no mention is made in the Speech as to the question of immigration. We must maintain a vigorous immigration policy. We were told during the elections that the present Government were in favour of immigration under certain conditions; but to judge from the letters that some of their party have written—I refer more particularly to that awful letter written by Mr. McCallum, the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, Perth—I can scarcely conceive the form of immigration that would suit them.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Before tea I mentioned that it was not so much what was contained in the Speech to which I

objected, but it is what is not contained in the Speech that I more particularly wish to address the House on. We have been informed that the Labour party are really in favour of immigration, and it is with surprise that I notice no mention of this very important matter in the Speech. The importance of that is not denied and it is hardly necessary for me to delay the House by giving reasons why we should go in for a vigorous immigration policy. That has been briefly but ably touched upon by Mr. Moss. The great aim of the Government which has just gone out of office was, if possible, to try and divert a stream of suitable people who are going to America and elsewhere, whom we are so badly in need of, to this country. When the late Government took office, or more particularly when I assumed control of the Colonial Secretary's Department at the close of the year 1905-6, the total number of immigrants who had arrived in the preceding year was only 333. When I speak of immigrants I mean assisted immigrants, that is, assisted by the Government. There would at that time be some who came out unassisted. At the present time there are a great number who come out without any assistance at all. I am only referring to those who are assisted by the State. As I have said, for the year 1905-6 the number was 333. It was rather uphill work to try and increase those figures. It was uphill work for the reason that we had countries like Canada, which were attracting people by the hundreds of thousands per annum, to compete against, and although the fares of the immigrants were not paid by those countries they spent huge sums of money in advertising.

Hon. W. Patrick: And the railways and the land companies advertise as well.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: As my friend explains, the advertising is not only done by the country interested, but by the companies owning railways and land, and the expenditure in advertising in different ways runs to over a quarter of a million annually. Again another difficulty so far as Western Australia was concerned, was that the flow of immigrants had practically stopped for some years to the

whole of Australia. True, the Australian States have advertised for immigrants since that time, but the distance which separates the old country from Australia has always acted as a deterrent to immigrants coming this way. When they leave the old country for Australia they think they will never see their people again, while when they go to Canada it is only a matter of six days, which is equivalent to a trip from Fremantle to Melbourne. These immigrants leave in the fine weather of the summer and return to their native land to avoid the severe winter in Canada. Although under the reduced rates the fare to Western Australia is almost the same as it is to Canada, the distance will to some extent act as a big deterrent to emigration. Naturally a country like Western Australia with a population of only a quarter of a million of people cannot compete against a country like Canada, and I am only naming one although there are others receiving as many immigrants per annum as we have total population. Our small efforts therefore were not felt. We were determined to persevere, and as soon as we could place those immigrants, and had all our arrangements complete, we kept gradually reducing the fare each year. Speaking from memory I think it was reduced from £8 at that time to £2 at the present time, while domestic servants are brought out for nothing. The latter merely have to deposit £2 at the London office, and it is returned to them in this State after they have been in domestic service for one month. In the year 1906-7 the total had increased to 700. In the next year the total was 950, in the two following years 1,400, and 2,000, while for the financial year which has just closed we received no fewer than 8,000 immigrants; so that through our administration we increased the number from 333, in 1905-6, to the very respectable total of 8,000 per annum. If the present arrangements are allowed to continue, the 12 months ending on the 30th June of next year should show the arrival of a total of between 12,000 and 15,000 assisted immigrants and others are coming in at the rate of 5,000 a

year. For the period ended the 1st October, there were no fewer than 4,500 nominated immigrants booked to arrive, and 2,000 odd assisted; in other words, at the time the late Government vacated office they left a list of immigrants with approved passages, including those on the water, to the number of 6,500. These will arrive without any effort on the part of the present Government within the next month. The arrangements which have been made for the reception of these immigrants are very complete; they are met on arrival and they are housed for three days free of charge, and for a further week at the nominal cost of 10s. per week for adults and less for children. There is a man travelling through the country finding suitable employment for them, and both men and women are placed in suitable positions immediately on arrival. Then again, before the last Government went out of office, arrangements had been made to establish a home for domestic servants to which they might go when out of employment in the first twelve months of their residence in the State. If domestics secure employment and find that it is not suitable, they will be able to secure accommodation at this home at a nominal cost, and stay there until they find suitable situations. Of course, at the expiration of twelve months they would be more familiar with the country and they would know where to go to assist themselves.

Hon. M. L. Moss: They ought to be married within 12 months.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I suppose there are plenty of young fellows who are waiting for these immigrant girls to come out. I remember receiving numerous letters from good young fellows in the country who asked whether they might make the acquaintance of some of these very nice girls who had been assisted by the Government to come to Western Australia. The Government, however, had not started a matrimonial agency, and I do not know whether the present Government intend to open one. If these young men in the country had the time to leave their farms with a view of seeing these

girls, I am sure that within 12 months a lot of them would be very happily married. We have heard also that a number of these immigrants are discontented. Let me say that 8,000 immigrants have arrived during the last year, and if any hon. member were to select 8,000 persons, I think he would do very well indeed if he found that 99 out of every 100 had come up to expectations. Thus, take one per cent., and I will ask whether any one can point to 80 persons who have arrived here during the last twelve months who have proved unsuitable or who are dissatisfied. I regret to say, however, some persons have been unpatriotic enough to make a good deal out of the little dissatisfaction which exists among those immigrants who do not find the country exactly to their liking. Is it to be wondered if you bring thousands of persons from England that there will be a sense of disappointment among some on their arrival in a strange and very dissimilar land? It would be peculiar indeed if that were not so. That does not say however that there is anything wrong with the country or the people in it. I think it speaks volumes for the contentment of the immigrants and the conditions under which they are placed, when I say that during the six months ended 1st October last, no fewer than 3,750 persons in this State had nominated their friends in the old country. They were almost, without exception, nominated by former immigrants, and then again if you take the last three months there were no fewer than 2,200 nominated by former immigrants.

Hon. M. L. Moss: That is the very best evidence of contentment."

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes. The six months period shows nominations are now being received at the rate of 7,500 a year, and the last three months at the rate of 8,000 a year. That is the very best that I can place before the House. It is also a good testimonial for the methods under which the immigrants have been placed in the past. Without immigration and with our vast territory, this country must stand still, and as one hon. member has remarked, is it reasonable to hope that we can hold this country

with its vast millions of acres, with the handful of people we have in it to-day, when there are the envious eyes of the European nations turned towards us for the absorption of their surplus millions. We must people the country, and by doing that we establish the best defence force we can get. By spending money on immigration we are doing more for defence purposes than by spending thousands in building cruisers or paying land forces. We are bringing to this State healthy immigrants. We have restricted the selection of them in the past to young and vigorous men who in a few years' time will become experienced and valuable colonists. I earnestly trust that this policy will be continued and that the present Government will not listen to the cry we have heard that the importation of immigrants or assisted immigrants to the State means a reduction in wages. If everyone preached that gospel, Australia would have no more population to-day than it had 50 years ago. That, indeed, is a short-sighted argument. I am prepared to admit that the importation of immigrants has not worked out particularly well for the late Government. Because unfortunately for the country they have heard this gospel preached too often. So we have on the one hand artisans and shop assistants believing that the immigrants were coming in to take their places, in consequence of which they wanted to vote against a Government in favour of immigration; while on the other hand those immigrants already in listened to the gospel and also believed that if more immigrants came in their wages would be reduced. Therefore we have not only our own people against us, but the very people whom we have assisted to come here. However, I do honestly hope that this policy of immigration will be continued. Apart from the 12,000 or 15,000 who are coming here if the arrangements are not interfered with as I have already mentioned, there is another avenue through which we had partly arranged to receive thousands of immigrants of the best class. I refer to the short service soldiers of India. When I speak of retired soldiers I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not, nor have I ever

been, an advocate of the old, pensioned soldier. That is not the class of men to come to a new country. But the system in the Indian Army of late years is to enlist for short service a number of men, up to about 10,000 a year. They are enlisted at 18 years of age for a service of six years, so the average age of discharge is 24 or 25. They are trained to work at some trade, and when they come out of the army at 25 they are the very pick of men suitable for Western Australia. We had made all arrangements to receive these people. We sent an officer to India, and we were in communication with the Agent General, advising him to see the Army authorities at Home, and get the regulations relaxed to the extent of allowing the soldiers to have a free passage to Fremantle. Mostly the discharges are made in London. That, certainly, is not to the good of these men, because they drift about London till they are hard up, and then drift away to the Argentine, and so are lost to the Empire for ever; whereas, if they came to Australia, they would still belong to the reservists, and from an army point of view would be saved to the Empire. Some of the commanding officers, reading the regulations their own way, refuse to discharge the men except in London, whilst other officers are willing to discharge them here. It is true our officer went to India some five or six months ago, and returned, and was to have started for India again a little while ago. The reason why we have not received up to now many of these soldiers is that they are only discharged in the trooping season, in the winter months, when an average of 10,000 of these men are brought from London, and 10,000 others are discharged. They are an excellent body of men, and I will have much pleasure in giving to the Colonial Secretary all information I can on this matter, although of course he can get all the information from the department. I have had numerous letters from friends who belong to the military and who have seen the advantage to be derived from this source of immigration. I will gladly place these communications before the Colonial Secretary. I am certain there will be no difficulty in obtaining free of

cost to Western Australia several thousands a year of the very best class of immigrant the country could wish to obtain. I would draw attention to another matter left out of the Speech. We heard during the recent campaign a great deal about the high cost of living, and, by what process of reasoning I know not, that was attributed to the late Government. The true reason, of course, is that given by Mr. Moss. You cannot increase wages without increasing the cost of production, and in a large measure that is the solution of it all. But, without interfering with wages at all, the cost of living can be and should be reduced, and it is therefore with surprise that I noticed that no mention was made in the Speech of the freezing works the late Government proposed to establish at Wyndham. There are in the Kimberley district thousands of cattle which should be brought to Perth, but the cost of bringing them here is enormous, some £3 10s. per head; and, more than that, they are on the boat some 10 or 12 days with the result that they waste a lot, and this adds considerably to the cost. If these freezing works were established at Wyndham, and the meat was chilled, you could bring it down at a mere tithe of the cost entailed to-day. In that one movement you would reduce the cost of meat considerably. It is only the wealthy man who can bring these cattle from Kimberley. Not only will you reduce the cost of meat, but you will help to settle the whole of that vast pastoral country in the Kimberleys. At the present time it is only a very small portion of Kimberley that is stocked up at all. There are millions of acres of fine pastoral country there which is not worth taking up, because if you breed cattle on it you can do nothing with them. Some time ago the late Government purchased, for the use of the aborigines, three small cattle stations at a place 25 miles west of Hall's Creek, called Moola Bulla station. On going into that question I was struck with one fact which I could not understand. Speaking from memory there were 12,000 odd head of cattle on the stations, and they were offered and eventually bought at 29s. 9d. per head, a certain proportion of young cattle and calves and all the

working horses and plant going in. It was asserted that there were some 400 fat bullocks on the station, but when these pastoralists produced their returns they could not satisfy me that in four years they had sold 100 bullocks off the station, and I became suspicious that the station was not what it was represented to be. As it turned out, the fact of the matter was that they had the bullocks but could not sell them; and there were these stations with 10,000 head of cattle, and the owners could not sell sufficient bullocks to pay interest on a small overdraft. The result was that we purchased these stations and brought down a ship load of bullocks for which we obtained £3 10s. at Wyndham to the number of 500, which we had purchased at 29s. 9d. If the freezing works were put up every head of cattle on these stations would be worth at least double what has been paid for it. The hide alone is worth over 20s., and if the beasts were boiled down for Bovril they would be worth double their present price. There is an excellent opportunity for taking up pastoral country, but it cannot be done until some assistance is given to the pastoralists to deal with their cattle. The big owners can afford to charter boats, but it is a big undertaking the small man cannot think of. Everything was ready for the establishment of these works, and of works at Fremantle to receive the meat when it came down. By the imposition of a stock tax, provision was to have been made that the people who benefited by these works should pay for them. I mention this in passing. It is a very important factor in the cost of living, and if the Government are desirous of reducing that cost of living I would earnestly draw their attention to this question. I had intended to speak on the question of the appointment of a Public Works Committee, but I will defer my remarks for another opportunity, contenting myself with saying I see no necessity for such appointment. The opinions I hold have been expressed by Mr. Moss. I agree with every word he said regarding that. One matter at which I have been somewhat concerned is the amending of the Early Closing Act. The late Government intended to amend that Act so

as to have a vote taken on the question of the half-holiday. I notice by to-day's paper that a referendum is to be taken on this question. I think that it is a great mistake. The Bill ought first to be passed, and a vote taken subsequently, so that every voter would know the terms of the Bill before he exercised his vote. I do not intend to go into the question of early closing, but will defer my remarks until the Bill is brought down. I have little further to say. It is not so much what is in the Speech as what has been left out of it. There is very little in the Speech. The Governor's Speech is generally very vague, but this one is, I think, especially so.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North): Whilst I cannot hope to emulate the eloquence of those speakers who have preceded me, I hope to be able to establish a standard of brevity which will, perhaps, be useful for those who come after. It seems to me almost impossible to avoid a certain amount of repetition in a debate such as this. Therefore, under the circumstances I wish to reiterate what already has been said by remarking that, as the occasion has occurred, I am exceedingly pleased to see Mr. Drew occupying the position he is now in and which he has occupied before. Mr. Drew occupied this position on another occasion and he did it with very great credit to himself, and carried out his duties with dignity, courtesy and ability. I also endorse what Mr. Cullen said as to this being a non-party House. I can only say that, so long as any measures are brought down that I think are for the good of the country, the Ministry can always rely upon my giving them any assistance that I can in passing them. Reading the Speech superficially, it is a very peaceful one; it seems very quiet and there seems to be an absence of anything showing belligerent signs; but there are, I think, in it some smouldering remarks that may at any time develop into flames, though, until we get a little further explanation on what some of them mean, it seems rather superfluous to attempt to criticise. The first thing in the Speech I would like to refer to is in connection with new railways. I take this opportunity of suggesting to the

Minister who represents the Government here that in future he might have the paragraphs in the Governor's Speech numbered. It would be of great assistance in referring to them. At present these are not numbered and it is difficult to refer to them without reading them over. The paragraph I refer to is—

My Ministers, fully recognising the importance of developing the agricultural resources of the State, have under consideration the routes of several railways, for the construction of which Bills will in due course be submitted to you.

I am very glad indeed to find that the Government intend to carry out a continuous policy in the same way as was instituted by the Government who have just gone out; and among these railways I hope one that will receive most prominent attention will be that from Midland Junction to Fremantle. It is by no means a parochial railway. It is one that is absolutely required to relieve the traffic going through the Perth railway station. It has been previously pointed out that if there were any break-down through a fire, or through an accident or any other cause, between Midland Junction and Fremantle upon the existing line, it might interrupt traffic to a very great extent; so I hope the Government will take into serious consideration the construction of a railway from Midland Junction to Fremantle. The next paragraph I would like to refer to is the following one, which says—

Special attention is being given to land settlement, the aim of my Advisers being to secure the bona fides of such settlement; to insure the utilisation and cultivation of the soil, and to avert the evils of purely speculative dealings in land.

These words, reading them superficially, are apparently very interesting; but reading between the lines, we may have them interpreted to mean that there is some legislation intended to deal with the question before us. I sincerely hope that there will be no experimental conditions tried for altering the fundamental process hitherto recognised. It has been stated, with or without foundation, that

in future no title deeds are to be granted. Mr. Cullen the other day stated from a sentimental point of view, from the home point of view, what a great drawback it would be for people not to have titles to their homes. I look at it from the commercial point of view. It would be a tremendous drawback indeed if people never had title deeds whereby they could make use of the improvements and the land they held for the time. No financial institution of this country would have dealings with people without proper title deeds. It may be argued that a lease is as good as a title deed; and for instance it may be said, "What about the pastoral leases?" It may be said they are as good as title deeds. I say certainly the pastoral leases are not as good as title deeds. They have conditions inserted in them for resumption that will prevent them ever becoming good security; and if any man knows anything about law and reads a lease instrument of a pastoral lease, he will wonder what he has; there are so many reservations that it is impossible for one to know what he has got. And if any further proof is necessary to show that the security of a pastoral lease is practically of little use, one has only to take a lease to a place like London, or anywhere where there are trust funds, and he will find that he will not get a single penny advanced on it; whereas for title deeds of freehold land one can go to any financial institution and get at least 50 per cent. of the value of the land. In England they will no more touch a pastoral lease than fly. The only security they would look upon would be the stock and the improvements; and stock are a little ephemeral, especially in a drought which has been so carefully spoken of in the Speech now before us. In the circumstances I would like to add my word of advice to the Government, if it is intended, to be very careful indeed how they take such measures as to prevent people having freeholds. I think they will find, if they try to use the experience of other countries, that it will not answer and will not be in the best interests of the development of the lands of Western Australia. The next point I would like

to speak on is with regard to the little insinuation very carefully made that there will be a little more taxation. The Governor's Speech reads—

It is contemplated that expenditure will increase, and my Advisers are directing their attention to a proportionate augmentation of the revenue.

I hear on all sides that the cost of living is extremely high. I hear everyone say, and I know it myself as well, that the taxation at the present moment is very stiff indeed. If I wanted an instance, I would bring forward the matter of land. Land in Western Australia is subject, first to the Federal land tax, then to the State land tax, then to the roads board tax, and then, I believe, it also has to submit to a health tax. I wonder where the proprietor of the land comes in for his profit out of it. In these circumstances I hope the Government will go very carefully into it before they propose fresh taxation. Rather I think they should take up a system of economy, instead of going in for the contemplated expenditure which is said to be increasing, especially in view of a preceding paragraph in the Speech which says—

In consequence of an abnormal diminution in the rainfall, many of the pioneers and settlers in these parts will have their trials and pioneering burdens increased.

How, in accordance with these pioneering burdens being increased, can it be hoped successfully to impose further taxation? I hope the Government will reconsider their statement in this direction. Among the Bills to be introduced will be one to reduce Ministerial and certain Parliamentary officials' salaries. I was one of those who voted for the increase and gave my reasons for it, and I have seen no cause whatever to change those reasons. I feel rather confident in this, for some reason or another, which I am not prepared to say exactly, that there will be no change whatever from the existing state of the salaries. I put this purely as a parallel case to the abolition of the Legislative Council, which I believe is one of the leading planks of the Labour platform. I do not think for one moment

that the Legislative Council will ever be abolished. I think certain parties in the State will reduce the qualification to the lowest ebb and that the two Houses will be elected practically on the same basis, but I do not think or dream for a moment that ever this Legislative Council will be abolished. I do not think it would be wise to do away with 30 useful members in a House like this. I thank Mr. Connolly for having brought up the question of the freezing works. This is a matter that is of concern to the constituents I represent. Mr. Connolly has given so many reasons for it that it is superfluous to add any more with the exception of just one or two. I think the freezing works should be established for three reasons. The first is for the reason that the price of meat is so high in Perth, and that the establishment of freezing, canning, and meat extract works at Wyndham would be the means of reducing the price down here. The second is, as was shown so admirably by Mr. Connolly, that the small man has no chance of realising on his produce under existing circumstances. The large man can afford to employ boats, and probably he is not able to give as good a price for the small man's produce. I know several instances in which for many years people were unable to sell their produce. The erection of these works will help the small man as well as the large. The third reason is that, unless the work is undertaken at once or quickly, it may be done by South Australia, whereas by doing it at once we shall attract a large quantity of Northern Territory cattle to the works at Wyndham and give employment to our own people up there. I hope the Government will give the matter early and favourable consideration. The late Minister for Lands assured me that everything was ready to carry the work on, that the money had been voted, or a large amount of it, in the last session of Parliament, and that he was prepared to put up the works; that the Government intended to do it and that no private people were to do it. I hope the present Government will continue that policy to enable the pioneers in that part of the

world to reap the harvest they deserve by being able to find a market for their produce. I shall now refer to pearling at Broome. It is an industry that requires a great deal of consideration. The pearlers at Broome have been established for years, a great many of them, and it is a hard and trying life they have, subjected as they are to exposure to storms and wreckage. I believe there are conditions being made lately which will make it even harder for them than before. I can only hope the Government will do all that they can to endeavour to see the industry carried on satisfactorily. I am fully aware a great deal of the control of it, especially in regard to the workers, is in the hands of the Federal Government, and that they have taken some steps to stop the work of coloured divers, but I hope the Government will recognise the advantage of continuing the work of that industry and do all they can to promote it, and give an opportunity to those men who have done so much to develop it and probably invested their all up there to continue their work at some profit. With these remarks I have much pleasure in supporting the motion moved by the Hon. Mr. O'Brien.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan): In supporting the motion for the Address-in-Reply I would like to congratulate the leader of the House on the position which he occupies, and the Hon. Mr. Dodd in attaining Cabinet rank, also to welcome Mr. Davis and Mr. Doland. The Speech itself seems to me to be mainly directing attention to the bad seasons we are supposed to be experiencing, and I think too much has been made of this matter. We certainly have in some parts of Western Australia a shortage of rain and, consequently, a shortage of crops, but in some parts of the State some of the crops are above the average, and in the district in which I am interested people are cutting as high as two tons of hay to the acre in quite a respectable area. In drawing attention to a bad season it is bad policy because the Speech refers to the raising of a loan, and therefore in raising a loan

one likes to be silent of any drawbacks that one may have. There is one thing that this deficient rainfall has shown us, that where good cultivation has been followed and where fallowing has been resorted to people have been able to get good crops, therefore the drought, if we may call it such, has really been a blessing in disguise. The Speech refers to the proposal to give equal political rights to all citizens. That can only mean that the civil servants will be able to go on the hustings and to stand at the street corners and criticise not only the Government but their superior officers. If such a state of affairs is allowed in this part of the world it will be the part of the Empire where such a state of affairs will exist, and if it is allowed it must bring about disaster. It is an unheard state of affairs. We shall have the police, I suppose, criticising the Commissioner as to what he should do in certain cases, and we shall have the office boys of the Treasury probably dictating to Mr. Scaddan what his policy shall be in regard to the floating of a loan. I trust when the Government are more matured to their offices they will find that this is not a question that should be pressed. With regard to the proposals of the Minister for Lands, I have already through the Press expressed my views on this important subject, therefore I do not intend to dwell on the disasters which are likely to follow if the regulations are not withdrawn, because a great deal has been said in the Press and by a deputation which waited on the Minister from influential persons, bankers and others, and anything that one says about this important question is repeated by Government supporters, and they talk about the Terrace squealing, and if that is so then we find all the banks and the whole of the Terrace squealing, and they will go on squealing until they are squelched altogether if the regulations are not withdrawn. I may say I have had a good deal of experience in land dealings in this State, therefore I thought it incumbent on me, when the land regulations were first mentioned, to express my opinions and I am not going to say

much more on the subject. Because I happen to be in a certain line of business Government supporters say that I am speaking in my own interests. I have been in this country 24 years, and all my interests are in this State. I go among the settlers a good deal and I know the hardships they have to endure. If the regulations are persisted in it will bring about a bad state of affairs and the present Minister for Lands hardly realises to the fiftieth part all the damage which he will do. Government supporters in referring to an interview I had with the Press say it is the Terrace squealing. One important supporter of the Government told several people that it was the Terrace they were trying to get at, and he went so far as to say that they referred to me as one whom they wanted to catch. I take that as a compliment. I did not know that I was so important an individual that I should have the whole Government battery raised against me. If they want to catch me then I can tell them I give up the race and allow myself to be caught. I do not mind being a martyr for the good of the country and therefore I shall consider myself caught. If I am credited, as I believe I am outside, of having dealings in thousands and tens of thousands of acres of land all I can say is, come along, and if I am holding any more land than I should hold that is not improved and that I am not entitled to, then let them take it from me. This should refer to all the lands in the State. If a man is holding land which he is not improving, then it is in the hands of the Minister for Lands to send his inspectors along and see if the man is carrying out his improvements. Under this regulation it is not the rich man who is going to suffer, because the rich man does not want any assistance from the banks, or from the Agricultural Bank; he can carry out his improvements, he can finance himself even to the limit under the new regulations, but the poor man is going to be hurt. The Labour Government have always posed as the poor man's friend, but it is the case of the poor man saying, God protect us from our

friends. Conditional purchase titles have gradually become to be looked upon as good marketable securities, and lenders of money, including the banks and the life insurance companies and private individuals are lending on these securities with the utmost freedom. Formerly freeholds were the only titles looked upon as safe securities, but so much confidence has been inspired in the conditional purchase lands that a great deal of money has been lent upon them. It is impossible to say how much money has been lent, but I should say several hundreds of thousands of pounds have been lent on the security of the conditional purchase title. What is the position to-day? The Minister for Lands has been waited on by the banking institutions and many people interested in public companies, also private people, and they have told the Minister that if the regulations are not amended these people will not lend money on this class of land in the future. The Minister has placed a doubt on conditional purchase securities, and once you create a doubt on a security that security is dead for all time. If there is any doubt about going to the Minister or to Parliament to transfer that security, that security is practically worthless. An immense amount of harm has been done already. Even if the regulation is withdrawn at once it will take many years, and more than all Mr. Bath's good intentions, to repair the damage which has been done. It has been said that for many years speculation in land has been rife. I deny this as far as 98 per cent. of the land is concerned. In a few instances, probably 2 per cent., there are people speculating in land, trying to sell the land at a profit before they do anything with it, but the remedy is not to run a mallee roller over 98 per cent. of the people but to watch the two per cent. and see that the improvements are carried out. Anyone taking up land for speculative purposes will not improve it unnecessarily; it will not pay him to do so. If these regulations are persisted in I think the country storekeeper, who is the bank in the early stages of land settlement for the small holder of the land,

and the man who has a few hundred pounds to lend on the security of a conditional purchase, will stop all assistance, and the Government are going to penalise the persons who assist in building up this primary industry of the State. That is all I wish to say on the land question. It is a very important question indeed, and one which we would do well to ponder over. Those who go among the settlers realise what the people are doing in the out-back places, and one finds that the discouragement is very great indeed, and the disappointment and the upsetting of financial arrangements has damped the ardour of many people and put back the land settlement of the State for many years. I want to refer to some remarks made by Mr. Brimage in seconding the Address-in-reply. I think that member's remarks caused more comment outside of Parliament than the actual Speech itself. The hon. member's references to the reduction of the salaries of Ministers were, to say the least of it, extraordinary, particularly as when the Bill was before the House last year to increase salaries the hon. member never raised his voice in protest, and if my recollection serves me right he was very eager, not only that the salaries of Ministers should be increased, but that members' salaries should be increased, and I think I am safe in saying that he was equally eager that the payment should be made retrospective, therefore it seems extraordinary that a few months afterwards, not a word being said about it in the interval, he comes here and commends the Government for having the decency to immediately set about reducing their salaries. The same hon. member made some reference to the Bullfinch railway, and when speaking Sir Winthrop Hackett interjected, asking something about this railway, and Mr. Brimage made a statement that was most uncalled for, and hinted that the late Government had something to hide in connection with the construction of that railway. He hinted that the Government had something to cover up, but the hon. member, under the privilege which members in this House have, would not enlighten the House. Why cast this slur?

Why did not the hon. member tell the House what it was all about? This suggestion on his part is one of a most contemptible nature, in my opinion. It would be interesting, if it would not weary the House too much to hear what this hon. gentleman had to say in regard to constructing this railway when it was proposed in this House a few months ago. The hon. Mr. Brimage said on that occasion—

I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this measure, and I can bear out what the Colonial Secretary has said with regard to the district. I am also pleased that the Government are taking the matter in hand so promptly, and I am pleased also that the Government have not dealt with the matter in the way that the gentleman who controls the Mines Department suggested, namely, that we should wait until further developments had taken place.

What a pity we did not!

I can assure hon. members that mining prospects in that district are really wonderful. I have spent now over a month in and around that particular locality, and I look forward to seeing a very large population settled in that district. The large mine itself, the Bullfinch Proprietary, is one of the most wonderful mines yet discovered, and I am sure the Colonial Secretary made a mistake when he put the ore down as being worth £7 per ton; I think he meant to say it was worth 7 ounces per ton. The value of the mine is, roughly, about half a million to-day with the ore in sight, and I feel quite sure of my figures.

If he is not more sure of anything than he was of those figures then he is not sure of much.

The Colonial Secretary on referring to his notes will find that he made an error in speaking of £7 in value instead of 7 ounces. The number of leases pegged out in that district during the last 12 months is between 500 and 580, and gold has been found from Southern Cross right through to Golden Valley, and with modern appliances for

the treatment of low grade ores, I think we will see in the Yilgarn district during the next five years a population of over 20,000 people. You have only to take these large mines which were recently purchased by Messrs. Bewick, Moreing, and Company and by Messrs. Doolette, the Corinthian and the Corinthian North, both of which contain immense quantities of ore worth 32s. a ton, ore which can be treated (mining, milling, etcetera), for about 16s. Thus it will be seen the great profit that remains after treating that ore, and it can be imagined what a great number of men will be employed in the industry there. Personally, I think the Government are taking no risk in building this line, and I am hopeful that before long prospectors will be found further North, and the railway pushed on in the same direction. I have been as far as Golden Valley, which is 30 miles from Southern Cross, and have seen some promising reefs there. I need only mention one or two, such as the Violet, which has an immense ore body, and Pine Hill, which is also at Golden Valley and which is another very big show, containing great quantities of ore, which will yield 16 or 17 dwts. (Hon. A. G. Jenkins: Will you recommend us to buy Pine Hills at 4s.?) I am sorry to say that the hon. member rather ridicules some of the mines in that district. It is only in consequence of his long residence on the coast, and that too accounts for his ignorance in connection with mining to-day.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: I was right about Pine Hills. They were 4s. then, and they are twopenney to-day.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: The hon. member went on to say—

If, however, he takes a trip through this district at the present time he will see something that will open his eyes. Going carefully through that district, as I have done, gold can be found every two or three miles, He must have carried it in his pocket, wherever outcrops occur, and quite

sufficient to justify the Government in expending this money on the railway. That is the railway he is now condemning.

There has been a lot said with regard to "wild cats" in this district. The developments during the past week are proving beyond doubt that gold-bearing lodes proceed from the Bullfinch mine in all directions. I saw a telegram from the Chaffinch to-day,

I think I have heard that name before.

which stated that over 5-ounce ore had been discovered there, and I think this is going to continue. On another mine I visited the day before yesterday a costeen eight feet deep revealed a lode under the alluvial soil, which by development ought to become a great mass. I could go on speaking in this way about the whole of that district from Southern Cross right through to Golden Valley. I have no doubt whatever that a large number of men are going to be employed there. The railway will facilitate matters, and the Government are wise in building the line immediately, because they will reap the benefit of the heavy freights arising from the machinery that will be required at the mines.

There is a lot more piffle like that in the remarks made by the hon. member on that occasion. It shows what a wonderful prophet this hon. member is, and what an extraordinary politician he has proved himself. His prophecies in regard to the profits of these mines have been about as unfortunate as they were when he launched his deep sea fishing company a few years ago, the smell of which has hardly yet died away. His references to the late Minister for Mines were entirely uncalled for. The late Minister is a particular friend of mine, and one of the deepest regrets I have is that he was not returned to this House at the recent elections so that he could reply to the hon. member personally. If he had been here the hon. member would have had such a scolding that he would hardly have dared to show his face in the House again. The remarks of the hon. member came with the worst of bad taste from him. What

does *Hansard* record in 1903? It shows the hon. Mr. Brimage to have said—

I congratulate the Government on getting back into power, and I trust that, during the coming year, the finances of the State will be put on a sound basis. I cannot help feeling a certain amount of sympathy with one of their members, Mr. Gregory. He is one of the hardest workers of the Ministry, and I, with many mining men, regret that he has been compelled to go back to his constituency and fight again for his seat. I trust that for the good of the country he will be successful.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: I rise on a point of explanation. My statement when speaking on the Address-in-reply was that Mr. Gregory had done very little for the mining industry during the last three years. The hon. member is quoting remarks I made previous to that time.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: The hon. member was careful to look up *Hansard* before he made that statement; but even with that explanation from the hon. member, we know that his statement is untrue. We know that the late Minister for Mines did a great deal during his last three years of office, more than I think he was justified in doing, for the mining industry. The hon. Mr. Moss has dealt fully with that question, but I do say that the remark of the Hon. Mr. Brimage was most uncalled for, and would never have been made except—well, I do not know how to express it. No one knows better than the hon. member that Mr. Gregory did more than he should have done in his desire to help the goldfields, and to say that he neglected them during the last three years, or any portion of the nine years that he was in office, is only arrant humbug. That is where the hon. member's bad taste and ingratitude comes in. Perhaps he forgets that Mr. Gregory came in for a great deal of abuse for trying to defend the hon. member who has attacked him in his absence. It is well within the memory of hon. members that the hon. gentleman was running a mine in the Malcolm district, and although he had no engineer's certificate he was raising men by means

of a winding engine, contrary to the regulations. He approached Mr. Gregory for a permit to work the winding engine himself, and very unwisely the Minister gave him that permit, but inserted a proviso that he was not to work it while men were in the shaft or to raise or lower miners. The hon. member gave his word to abide by the terms of the permit.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: Mr. President, is the hon. member speaking in accord with the Governor's Speech?

The PRESIDENT: Yes; the hon. member is entitled to speak at large.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: I think that the best method to adopt is for the hon. member to call for the papers from the Mines Department. At the present time he is not making statements which are in accord with fact.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member is perfectly in order in talking on almost every subject, but especially about a speech made in the course of the present debate.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: I am talking about an hon. gentleman, who, if he had only been a month in office, had done more for the mining industry than the hon. member has done in the whole of his life. I was saying that the Minister gave the hon. member a permit to work his own winding engine, but specially endorsed upon it that he was not to operate it while men were working in the shaft, or to raise or lower miners. The hon. member gave his word that he would abide by the terms of the permit but, to use an expression which is current on the goldfields at the present time, he "Brimaged," and did use the engine contrary to the permit, and in the interests of human life he was prosecuted and fined. This is the gentleman who to-day speaks in condemnation of Mr. Gregory. Again, perhaps the hon. member's opinion of Mr. Gregory has altered since the late Minister refused to lend him £1,000 to develop a mine of his which has since proved worthless. If this is so, it accounts for a great deal of what the hon. member has said. It is just as well to remember these things when the hon. member makes statements such as these. It is well to

know what underlies them so that we may get at the truth. This is a bare statement of facts, and I defy the hon. gentleman to call for the papers and have them laid on the Table of this House. If he does he will find that they disclose something which even I have not mentioned.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage: They have been tabled before.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: Well, call for them again. With regard to the other important matters in the Speech, I agree that the Early Closing Act should be brought down so that the public may have ample opportunity of knowing what they have to vote upon. I do hope that the referendum will not be hurried but that a full expression of opinion may be obtained. The reference to the establishment of a university I am pleased indeed to see. I am also glad to note that the Government realise the importance of this State being linked up with the Eastern States by the Transcontinental Railway, and that they will do everything in their power to push forward that great work. The increase of the powers of the Agricultural Bank I am heartily in accord with, as well as the other progressive matters referred to in the Speech. With these few remarks I have pleasure in supporting the Address-in-reply so ably moved by the Hon. Mr. O'Brien, whom I congratulate on the speech which he made.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): Before making any remarks in reference to the Speech I would like to add my congratulations to the hon. Mr. Drew on the high position he occupies, and also to the Honorary Minister, and to congratulate the new members who have taken their seats in the House. I do not wish to weary the House, and I shall confine my remarks principally to the question of land settlement. I may say that I endorse all the remarks that have fallen from the speakers this afternoon. Before proceeding, however, I should like to make reference to the second paragraph in the Speech concerning the Imperial Conference. The words used there, "pulsations of kinship," appeal to one, and the blood seems to respond to the words. One can-

not help wishing that these Conferences could take place more frequently, and that the people of England, from whom we are descended, could know more of the great heritage they possess in Australia. I hope the leader of the House will call the attention of the Agent General to a fact that drew my notice while in England, that they are teaching lessons concerning Australia which are absolutely untrue, particularly in regard to Western Australia. The children in England are taught that the grass here is so sharp as to cut one's feet and that one cannot walk about. It is ridiculous having statements like that taught to the children. Perhaps the bigger children go straight to their schools from a lecture arranged by the Agent General as to the possibilities of Western Australia, and hear an altogether different account of the country. It is our duty to see that these books are revised. It should be a simple matter. I tried to get hold of one of the books at Swindon, but the teacher would not let me have one. I could only take a few notes and these unfortunately I have mislaid. It is extraordinary reading these books, and I consider it the duty of the Government to endeavour to get these erroneous statements struck out so that the young in England, to whom we look for our future population, should be given an opportunity of learning the truth about this great State. Mention is made in the Speech as to the drought we are said to be experiencing in the eastern districts. It is a great pity this paragraph has appeared; because those who know anything about the matter—and I am one who resides just on the borders of this district and in a portion of the great wheat belt—know some of the finest wheat crops are being cut this season. In fact, every farmer I have met tells me that he has had a better crop this year than he has had for years. My sympathy goes out to the few settlers whose crops have failed, but there will not be more than five per cent. of absolute failures. At least 75 per cent. of the crops will be tip-top, and the remainder will be very fair to medium. The statement in the Speech refers not only to the Eastern District but to the land along the Great Southern,

where we find the season is one of the best we have had for years. Certainly there is a shortage of water for stock to the east; but that is because the people were not ready; they did not put in enough money for the construction of dams, and other causes have led up to it. Some of the Eastern States only want a few facts of this kind to hang misrepresentations on. Despite Federation they will not be backward in hanging them on pegs of this sort, and it is a pity a statement such as this is sent broadcast throughout the world. As a rule the season is a good one in 75 per cent. of the cases, even in the very district referred to. It is a little dry, but not by any means so dry as some of us have experienced in years gone by. The results are simply astonishing. We hear of districts where they expect to get 30 bushels of wheat and even up to three tons of hay per acre, and that is in the very district spoken of, so I think a little more care should be taken before such statements are sent broadcast throughout the world. I congratulate the Government on the steps they are taking to provide the settlers who need the relief with water. I trust they will make the lot of these people as easy as possible by giving them a good supply of water. The paragraphs dealing with the mining industry make excellent reading and show a faith in that industry it is pleasing to note. Though I am not a mining man, I have been 18 years in the House and have not yet thrown an obstacle in the way of any proposition brought forward for the advancement of mining. I defy anyone to bring forward an instance in which I have voted against the mining industry. I may say I was one of the first upon the fields. I did not go as a mining man, but I went with as much pluck as most of the mining men. I took 14 teams loaded with flour from Doodlakine to the goldfields and found no market, and I had to pay up to £40 and £45 a ton for carting it. I lost on the transaction. I mention this by the way to show that I do know something about the fields. I was at Hannans. I was three months prospecting and trying to make up for the loss on the flour. I was there the day the man pegged out the Lake View; I was right on the spot; I

shot an emu at the lake that morning. I know something of the men who went up there at that time. I am pleased at the expectations which the Government have; and despite what has been said by one or two who try to make ill-feeling between the coast and the goldfields, the Ministry will find that the people on the coast will back them up every time in trying to make this industry prosper. I now come to a subject I know a little more about than mining, and that is the question of land settlement. A great many of my notes are practically useless because members have said what I would have said and have noted down; but despite the paragraph reading so innocently, to those who live in the great wheat belt, a portion of which I have the honour to represent, in view of the fact that the Government have done something with regard to transfers and have put restrictions on the holders under Clause 56, non-residence, there still appears to be a sort of sting tail. The Government have not taken the people enough into their confidence as to what they intend to do, and it is easily understood why. We find that among the supporters of His Excellency's advisers to-day there are only two representatives of the great wheat belt. Out of 12 seats constituting this belt the Labour party have only succeeded in winning two, and there is a great feeling of unrest in that area as to who is to advise the Government as to the requirements of that great belt. I own that the present Minister for Lands, who seems to be the only redeeming point in connection with this matter, has had practical experience of land through working his own land for a considerable time. I know we have in Mr. Bath a man who will do his best to give a fair deal; I have the highest respect for him, and he has been a friend for many years; but one swallow will not make a summer. We have also a gentleman who was lately an officer in the Lands Department but had no practical experience in farming life, though able otherwise. There is not the least doubt about it, unless the Government are prepared to listen to the advice tendered to them by the 10 members on the Op-

position we will find these ten districts practically disfranchised. These districts have not endorsed the Labour policy. I speak of the big area which is carrying the country along to-day and has done more to draw attention to Western Australia than the goldfields have of late years. It is doing more lasting work, and to-day is responsible for the attention drawn to the State, yet it is practically disfranchised unless the Government will listen to and act in accordance with the advice tendered by its ten representatives in the Opposition. This belt has distinctly said it will have nothing to do with the Labour policy. The people of the belt know the trials and worries they have on the land, and they do not want any experimenting. Enough has been said about the proposal to do away with freeholds. If the Government want something to be done, why not adopt the same procedure as in New Zealand and let the people have the choice of taking on freehold or a lease of 999 years. Wherever the Labour party has succeeded in winning the Government benches its members do not know what they want. Take New South Wales. The Labour Government there went in under exactly the same conditions as our Government have, and they used the same expressions; they threatened to do the same things, but had to modify their remarks very considerably when they got into power, so much so that they had to appoint a new Minister for Lands. I will read a short extract from one of the leading papers of New South Wales that will show the position to-day—

When Labour first assumed office there was no doubt as to what the policy was. The Conversion Act was to be repealed, and freehold was to become a thing of the past in future dealing with the Crown. But this policy nearly wrecked the Ministry, and to save their bacon they had to get a new Minister for Lands and a new policy. What this new policy is can best be gleaned from a recent speech made by Mr. Beeby, the new Minister. He said, in effect: The Government will not touch the existing

right of any landholder. As to all Crown lands made available in the future, we intend to offer lands only in living area blocks. We intend to offer them as home farms or selections. The lands will be offered on perpetual lease, not on leases for terms, as has been suggested, but in perpetuity.

Now, what is the difference between that and freehold? This is the difference—

No rent will be charged for the first five years, provided that the settler expends in improvements each year $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the original capital value of his holding. At the end of the five years he pays his rent to the Crown at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the capital value. For all time rent will be fixed on that basis.

For all time let it be marked. This is what it has come to. It is only a matter of experiment. For all time land will be charged on this basis—

At the end of the five years the homestead selector gets his deed of grant—a grant to himself, his heirs and assigns, for ever. The only restrictions placed upon him will be that he will not be able to sell to any person holding a living area, and will not be allowed to take up and hold a block for speculative purposes. The first reappraisal of his rent will take place twenty-five years after his taking possession, and subsequently once during each twenty years. In order to safeguard him against excessive reappraisal, the platform of the Labour party contains a proviso that the rent fixed on reappraisal shall not exceed $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the value of an adjoining freehold of similar quality.

That is the position as it exists to-day in New South Wales. They went before the country and ran the seats in exactly the same manner as the Labour party here have done, but they found that they could not carry out their policy. That statement which I have read comes from a reliable newspaper and no doubt is a true exposition of the situation. I want to say then to the Government that before they take rash steps they had better look closely into this matter, and if they do

not, they will create one of the greatest set-backs that the people have ever experienced. This feeling of unrest is abroad and it needs to be calmed. What would be the position to-day on the gold-fields if, assuming they had 12 seats, 10 of them were practically disfranchised, as is the case with agriculture? There would be nothing short of a revolution. The miner is a worthy man, I have nothing to say against him, or indeed any workman; I am a workman myself, and I know the value of these men, and I know they are equally necessary to the advancement of the State as is the farmer. But what would the miners think if they felt that their laws were made entirely by farmers? What is the position of the farmer when he feels that the laws regarding land settlement are being made by men who have not had any experience in farming? I am going to make an appeal to the Colonial Secretary to let the people know where they stand, and to make an announcement in regard to the position. At the present time we do not know where we are; we do not know what is going to happen, and the consequence is the position has become untenable. So far as the people far out are concerned, there is not the slightest doubt that they will leave their holdings, unless they are given an assurance of better treatment in the future than has been indicated by the speeches made by the Minister for Lands. I do want to especially impress upon the Minister the need of keeping in view the commercial aspect in connection with this matter. We have only lately got the banks to take up conditional purchases, and we find that they have opened up in country towns. They are not extortionate in the rates of interest they charge. I have had 35 years' experience amongst the farmers and I know all about their trials. I was a working farmer myself and I know all about it, and I know that in the past the farmers have never been able to get money as cheaply as they are getting it to-day. Six per cent. on all good properties is not too bad from a private institution. These banks took conditional purchases as securities until the announcement made by the

Minister for Lands. I do not know why we should interfere at all with what has been going on so well; it seems to me there is no cause for it. We have a steady flow of intending settlers, and why this experimental legislation at this time? It is all a mystery to me. We have three per cent. of our land alienated, or in process of alienation, and we have 97 per cent. left on which experiments can be made if necessary. I trust that wise counsels will prevail and that the Government will not adopt the extreme measures that they have threatened to take. I have failed to find one speculator, in the sense in which I know him, on the Great Southern line. There was, I believe, one in the true sense, but in all other instances the people in that part of the State have taken up land legitimately. What is a land speculator? Is he the man who has been tempted to try his hand at farming and because he knows he is a failure seeks to get his money back by offering his block for sale? My 35 years close association with the land and the settlers enables me to tell the House that there is many a brave effort made, many a hope deferred, and many heartaches experienced by nine out of ten who have been driven to sell through the columns of the Press. You can no more make successful tillers of the soil by selection or by Acts of Parliament than you can make successful men in any other calling or profession. There must be natural adaptability; you always have to cull out the failures. Can you blame a man for putting his property on the market after he has worked it and trying to make a little profit on his labour? With regard to the real land speculator as we know him, we do not want him, and if you can find him pay him out by every means in your power, but I do not know where he is unless you call a speculator the man who takes up a larger area than he himself requires, but who has his children who are growing up to consider. So long as that man is carrying out the improvements, can you blame him for doing that? Is he a land speculator because he has increased his holding whilst his children are growing? I trust the Government will

look well into this matter. With regard to other matters contained in the Governor's Speech, I am glad to notice that it is the intention of the Government to build homes for the people, and that it is proposed to increase the capital of the Agricultural Bank and extend its operations. I am only sorry that they did not say in the Speech that they were going to build homes in every town in the State. For a work of this description the Government are justified in borrowing money, and borrowing largely. I desire briefly also to refer to a statement made by the Premier at Kalgoorlie, that it was the intention of the Government to take over the hospitals. I sincerely trust that is going to be done. In my little town, having had the opportunity of being on the hospital committee, I know that the management of that institution has been a positive burden. With regard to the Speech generally, I want to say that there is nothing in it at which one can cavil; it is not what they have said in it that we are afraid of, or that we can object to, but it is what they have left unsaid, and the sooner the Government can put the people right in that respect, the sooner we will be able to go along the even tenor of our way.

On motion by Hon. W. Patrick, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.14 p.m.
