

that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday evening.

Motion put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the House at its rising adjourn until 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 26th June.

Motion put and passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at 4.45 p.m.

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 26th June, 1895.

*Death of Hon. E. G. Henty—Address-in-Reply—Adjournment.*

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 3 o'clock p.m.

#### DEATH OF THE HON. E. G. HENTY.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I deeply regret, Mr. President, that the first address I should have to make would be one of a melancholy character. This morning I received a telegram from the Post Office, which reads as follows:—"I beg to report that the Hon. Mr. Henty, M.L.C., died here suddenly last night." It is signed by Mr. A. Thompson, Postmaster, Coolgardie. The late Mr. Henty, as hon. members are aware, was a colleague of mine. He was returned for the Northern Province at the same election that I was, so that, personally, I deeply regret the unfortunate news. It is always sad to hear of the death even of acquaintances, but when we come to the death of one who was intimately connected with us, as Mr. Henty was, one who worked with us last year, and took an interest in all the measures that were passed and deliberated upon for the good of the colony, one who showed himself in all his bearings to be a thorough gentleman, and one about whom there was nothing despicable—I say, Sir, when we hear of the death of a gentleman of that description, it is the very saddest news that can be conveyed to us; and I feel sure all honorable members of this House will join with me in sympathising with his friends on the sad

tidings they heard this morning. Mr. Henty has done good service to the colony through his mercantile transactions. In these he has endeavoured to develop the colony, and in carrying the trade into our interior parts, he has done as much as a good many, and in consequence our thanks are due to him. Not only was Mr. Henty well known here, but portions of his family are well and respectably known in the other colonies, and they have been associated with these colonies almost from their inception. I do not know that I need take up much time in speaking on this sad matter. I feel sure, however, that honourable members would like to show some respect for their dead friend, and, under the circumstances, I shall now move that the President do leave the chair until half-past 2 o'clock this evening.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: Mr. President,—As a strong personal friend of the late Mr. Henty, perhaps you will allow me to second the motion which has just been proposed by the hon. the Minister for Mines. I am sure I speak for all the members of this House when I say we echo to the fullest, the language he has used in regard to our departed friend, and the terms of regret he has spoken of as to the loss to this House and to this colony. Mr. Henty's decease unfortunately makes the first gap by death in the ranks of this Council since its election, and it is the more to be grieved at, because among all the members of this House we might have selected Mr. Henty as the one who promised to live longest, and to work hardest, for the good of Western Australia. He was a man who has left no enemy behind. I think we may challenge anyone to find a wrong deed, or recollect an unfriendly act or any hostile feeling which is within the memories of this Legislative Council or elsewhere. And it is with still greater regret that I have to mention that he leaves, at a time of his life when he was young, strong, promising and full of hope—a wife and family who are I believe in a peculiarly helpless condition. I beg to second, with deep regret, the motion of the hon. the Minister for Mines.

Question put and passed.

THE PRESIDENT then left the Chair till 7.30 o'clock p.m.

On resuming,

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### ADJOURNED DEBATE.

THE HON. J. C. G. FOULKES: I think any

outside person who is not interested in this colony will admit from the Speech which was read by His Excellency the other day, that the state of affairs in this colony is very much better than that in any other part of the Australian dominions. I do not propose to deal with all the items here, but I think, Sir, that one very good item is that which refers to the question of railways. There I am glad to see it stated that the revenue for the present financial year will be not only sufficient to cover the working expenses, but also to pay interest, and the sinking fund of the capital expended in the construction. I think we all agree that when trade is good, railways are bound to pay, and that when trade is bad, they are not likely to pay. The question whether the railways are paying or otherwise is one of the best possible indications of the state of trade, and here we see that the railways are practically paying the full amount that could be possibly expected from them. I think great credit should be given to the person who is responsible for the management of these railways. I am sure every honorable member will agree with me that credit should be given to the General Traffic Manager. When that officer arrived in the colony, about four years ago, there was practically no system of railway management. There was no proper organisation, and few, if any, men who had any knowledge of railway management. Since then Mr. Davies has practically re-organised the service. As I said before, he had no men who were able to render him proper assistance, and he was obliged for the first two years to labour under very great disadvantages; but at last he has been able to obtain men from the other colonies, and I think now he is supported by a good staff. I would remark, however, that I think the Department attaches too much importance to the principle that these lines should be run upon commercial principles. These railways were made not so much for making money as for opening up the country, and the Department gives too much importance to the credit side of the ledger. They have neglected to grant a number of facilities asked for, which were only reasonable, merely because they were afraid they would lose a few pounds here and there. We must remember that unless you give reasonable railway facilities it is impossible to open up the country. I see here, in another part of the Speech, it is proposed to reduce some of the charges on agricultural and

pastoral produce to the lowest possible paying point, and I think every individual in the country will be exceedingly glad to see that paragraph. I believe the Traffic Manager and the Minister will see that not only are these charges reduced to the lowest possible point, but that when the rate are fixed they will send a list of them to every settler in the various districts, because I think a great many of them are unaware of the facilities already offered for sending goods by railway. It was only the other day I learnt that a parcel could be sent from Perth to Busselton, a distance of about 150 miles, for about sixpence. And I think these farmers, when they are made aware of the facilities for sending their produce to a market, will avail themselves of the railways more than they do at present. Some time ago there was an outcry for the reduction of the charges for sending goods to the various goldfields. I hope the Ministry will be firm on this point and refuse to reduce these charges. These people living on the goldfields are birds of passage, and when the goldfields are worked out—and I believe the average life of a goldfield is, judging by the experience of other colonies, about 15 years, these people will leave the colony and will leave the permanent settlers to bear the cost of paying off the expenditure in the construction of these railways. The Government have spent thousands upon these goldfields, and these railways have been constructed solely for the convenience of those people living on the goldfields, and it is only right that when called upon to give some proportion of the cost of them that they should do so. It seems only just that they should by paying higher freights so pay some part of the cost of construction, otherwise they will merely contribute the small Custom's duty paid at Fremantle on the timber sent up to them. Another question which I think is more important than any other question in this Speech, is the sanitation of the different towns of the colony. It does not matter how prosperous we are, we must remember the old adage "Health is far preferable to Wealth." It is a question which concerns not only the poor man but the rich man also, and it means there is a heavy drain upon people living in the towns, who have to bear the increased expense of hospitals, of medical attendance and nurses, and in a number of

cases I know of men who have been impoverished for six months by having to pay the different expenses incurred through the fever they have suffered from. Men have been carried off and have left wives and families who are wholly dependent upon the charity of their friends. Medical authorities are all agreed that in Perth next summer, unless the question of sanitation is considered and great improvements are effected, we shall be in a much more unsatisfactory state than in the past. I notice a clause in this Speech—Clause 24—which says, “this matter is being considered by the Government, my Ministers are anxious to assist all local efforts, and a contour Survey of Perth is now being carried out with the object of enabling reliable estimates to be prepared for any drainage or other works that may be necessary in connection with the sanitation of the metropolis.” Well, Sir, I hardly think that seems definite enough. This question ought really to have been considered some time ago, and I hope before this Session closes we shall have a full and definite scheme for the drainage of the city and other towns of the colony. The Government must be fully acquainted with what is going on. I hope they will see that the health of the people is of more importance than material prosperity. I do not think I have any more to add. I think we can only say, that when this Speech is recorded in time to come, it will be seen that since we have had Responsible Government we can congratulate ourselves upon the state of this Colony, now in the fourth year after we have had Responsible Government.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: In rising to support the motion before the House, I have much pleasure in congratulating the Government on the sound financial position of the colony, as shadowed forth in the Speech of His Excellency yesterday. It is not my intention to go through it item by item, but I shall deal with the more important points contained in it. Firstly I will allude to Clause 4, which refers to the Federal Council, which met at Hobart in January last. In my opinion Federation is simply a fad. As far as Western Australia is concerned, we have everything to lose and nothing to gain by it, and I consider that the money voted for sending the delegates to the Convention, was money simply thrown away; more especially do I consider this so when I remember that part of it went to pay the expenses of that patriotic gentleman—the Hon. Mr. Hackett. I deeply regret that

he is not here to hear my remarks, but no doubt he will have the pleasure of reading them in his own paper to-morrow. After leaving this colony and shaking the dust off his feet, little did he think of the people he had left behind to suffer the heat and burden of the day, for if he is reported properly, he is credited with advising the people of South Australia to immediately make the line to Coolgardie and thereby secure the whole of the goldfields' trade. It never seems to have struck him that he was simply robbing the people of this colony by advocating that this step be taken. Probably, however, the hon. gentleman never expected the remarks to be published. No doubt he considered that the reporters there would treat him in the same way that the reporters of the hon. gentleman's paper treat the speeches of hon. members of this House. However, after expending the money, I am glad to see that the Government has come to the conclusion that Federation is not wanted, and I trust that there will be no more money spent in the same way—spent on what I call simply a fad. The next item I have to deal with is that contained in Clause 5, and I will only refer to the last three lines of it. It says: “The surveys for the railway from Donnybrook to Bridgetown are in hand, and the necessary Bill to provide for its construction will be submitted for your approval.” Hon. members will bear in mind that last Session my objection to making this line was based on the fact that it was a railway towards Bridgetown and not to Bridgetown. Now we are told that the line is to go to Bridgetown. If that be so I shall vote for it; but not otherwise. That was what I said last Session, and it is my opinion now. How the Hon. Mr. Burges can reconcile his remarks of yesterday with those of last Session is more than I can understand. On the 4th October last, Mr. Burges, in an excellent speech when seconding my motion, pointed out that there were only 274 acres of wheat, 58 acres of oats, 629 acres of hay, and 94 acres of orchard and vineyard—in all 1,190 acres, under cultivation, and he said he was opposed to the Government spending this money for the benefit of people who had only about 1,000 acres under cultivation. He went on to say (I will quote his own words): “When all the country on existing lines is let out as agricultural areas, we shall have plenty of land to go on with for the next 20 years without constructing further lines of Railways to open up new country.” Further

on he said :—"There is an enormous amount of poison country through which this line will go, and the Government have no right to construct a Railway for the benefit of those who hold the land." I ask hon. members whether the position has in any way changed since last October, when this Speech was made? It may be that since I have been away from the colony the trees in this district which, according to the hon. member, took half-a-day to walk round, and the ground which cost £100 an acre to clear, have been swept away by a willy-willy.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: Read that from *Hansard*.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I will give the hon. gentleman a quotation of his own in a minute or two, which will take him all his time to answer. I want to find out what has turned the hon. gentleman's opinion. Yesterday he said (and I am quoting from the *Hansard* report):—"As regards the railway line from Donnybrook to Bridgetown, I am rather in a fix about it, because last year I was one of its greatest opponents on the ground that I did not think it was justified. I asked that it might stand over until this year. With the present state of the finances I shall not be opposed to it, and I hope and trust we shall be able to construct many more Railways through agricultural districts, or branch lines into them." No doubt the loop-line from York to Southern Cross is what is referred to. Further on he says :—"We know that we are greatly dependent on our goldfields, but they may give out, and we should endeavour to have something to fall back upon. There is enough good agricultural land in the Eastern Districts to supply twice our present population." In his speech in October, the honorable gentleman pointed out that there was enough land along existing railways to meet the supply for the next twenty years, and even yesterday he admitted that in the Eastern Districts there is still enough land to supply twice the present population, and yet he now says that more railway lines are required. There is, however, one thing I am glad of, and that is, that he cannot conscientiously vote for the loop-line from York through the Greenhills (although I see his name among a deputation on the subject), because he has told us that there is twenty years' supply of land, and that it is not necessary to open any more up at present. Now I come to Clause 6, which refers to the developments at the Collie. I am not aware

that any fresh developments have taken place. With several members of this House I was at the Collie when the Government invited members to attend. The coal I saw there was very good of its sort—indeed it was better than the first surface show; but unless it has altogether altered it is not a commercial coal. I would remind hon. members that this field cannot run away, and I maintain that the Government should prove that coal exists before building a line. By coal, I mean the coal of commerce, and not that which the Government are now using at a cost of £2 a ton, when they can import good Newcastle coal and land it at Fremantle for £1 a ton. So far as I am concerned, if the Government can prove by boring that true coal exists, I shall be, with other hon. members, only too glad to support the construction of the line: but I cannot do so unless it is shown that the coal is of commercial value. The Government will not be doing right in my opinion by running a railway to the Collie to supply their own railways with coal. A coalfield to be of any use must be such that we shall have ships coming here to load with the article produced; but no steamer would ever buy the coal that is now being obtained. In regard to item 7, I am glad to find that it is at last proposed to go in for deep boring. It struck me when I first read that paragraph that the Government had fallen out with the Geologist. It seems to have taken five years to fall out with the gentleman, and I blame him for the fact that deep boring has not been commenced long ago on the fields. One thing has struck me in regard to our goldfields, and that is that no reliable estimate is forthcoming as to the gold obtained. The other Australian Colonies have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds in advertising so as to get immigration, but here we have one of the grandest advertisements that could be had, and we are losing sight of it altogether. I referred to this matter last session. At present the Government have no means of arriving at an estimate of the gold obtained in the colony, and thousands of ounces leave our shores which we have no knowledge of. At the present moment the fee paid by the miner is £1 a year. If this were done away with, and a license fee of 6d. or 1s. charged, and a tax of 6d. or 1s. per ounce levied on gold, with a fine of £50, together with forfeiture of the gold and six months imprisonment for not declaring it, we should then be able to get at a proper estimate of

what is taken from the ground. Unless some stringent measures of this kind are taken, we shall never know how much gold is being obtained in the colony. In regard to paragraph 8 of the speech I must congratulate the Government on the steps they have taken to open up the Dundas goldfield. It has been a long time coming, but any steps which may be taken in this direction will repay the country, for there is no doubt from information received that there are vast gold mines there. Now I come to paragraph 13 dealing with the Fremantle Harbour Works. This work was commenced before any member of the present House was elected, and of course hon. members are, therefore, in no way responsible for them. I may be a pessimist, but I think it will be proved in the course of five years or so that in them we have a mill stone round our necks, and I say so because all the money spent will not lead to the production of a single bushel of wheat, or induce the tillage of one acre of soil. The whole of this work, on which thousands of pounds are being spent, is being done on the reputation of one man. His reputation may be good, but it will be a sorry day for Western Australia if we are left with the reputation and the loss of one and a half millions of money. Even the Fremantle people, to whom this money was voted as a sop, will be sorry for it, because I think everyone will agree that, if this harbour is once opened, the ships will pass by the present port and come up the river to Perth. In ten years' time, if the harbour is open, we shall see the steamers alongside the wharves of Perth. With regard to paragraph 14 I agree that the dredge at Princess Royal harbour has done good work, but still I think we shall find it necessary to keep it there. Only last week the *Orolara* came in stirring up the mud, and the captains generally are afraid of running on their anchors. A survey of the harbour is, I believe, being made, and I am sure, if the Government find it necessary, they will keep the dredge there and continue the work. Coming to the reference to the Estimates contained in paragraph 18, I hope when they come before us, we shall find that the Government has put down a sum for testing the coal deposits at Albany. I do not ask this on account of Albany, but in the interests of every part of the colony. So far as I have seen, the indications there are far superior to those at first seen at the Collie. Although the Geologist reports against them, I believe

good coal will be found there. I do not ask the Government to give sufficient to raise 1,000 tons of coal at 10s. a ton, or to cart another 1,000 tons at 30s. a ton, but I do ask them to test the coal. Private enterprise will do the rest. I might point out that I do not ask this as a favor in order to compensate for the shifting of the port of call for the mail steamers from Albany to Fremantle, because to my mind that is laughable. The Eastern colonies have been struggling for many years to get their mails as fast as possible, and I am sure they will not tolerate a delay of 16 hours, simply for the sake of allowing this Government to carry out its ideas of centralization, and it is more laughable still to imagine a P. & O. boat coming into Fremantle, even when the harbour is complete. I think Sir James Lee-Steere was right, when he said that if she came in and tried to get out she would break her back in the attempt. While speaking on the subject of the Estimates, I think it would be as well if a sum of money were placed on them to procure a good architect for the colony. If the Post Office at Albany is a sample of the best work that can be produced by the present staff, the money will be well spent. It is quite impossible to explain the building, but I would advise anyone going to Albany not to come away without seeing it. The floors must have been an after-thought, for the iron piles holding them are in the centre of many of the windows, and what is worse, the stone for the building has been imported. Side by side with it is the old Post Office, which has stood for thirty or forty years, and the stone for which was quarried in Albany. It is, even now, better looking and sounder stone than the imported. There are some people who consider nothing any good unless it is imported. I had the curiosity to ask why the stone was imported, and I was told that the local stone was too soft. No doubt my informant thought that I, also, was very soft to believe it. All that is now required for it is a 20ft. ditch and a drawbridge; then it is complete. I enter my strong protest against the Government importing anything, whether it be stone or anything else which can be procured in the colony. I now come to item 19 which refers to the large increase in the revenue; but I see no mention made as to the repeal of the Stock Tax. For my part I consider the imposition of this Stock Tax an iniquity. The price of meat at the present day is ridiculous. In Sydney, the other day, I took

the trouble to walk into some of the leading butchers' shops. I found that 9lbs of beef steak could be had for 6d., and that mutton was from 1½d. to 1d. per lb. Here it is from 9d. to 6d. per lb., and mighty tough at that.

THE HON. H. MCKERNAN: Federation is the remedy.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I do not know that the butchers make anything out of the Stock Tax, for I know one firm in Perth and Fremantle who, during the last 12 months, turned over £40,000 and only made £800 profit. I consider that the Government could well do away with this tax. If they cannot, then they should put on the Estimates a sufficient sum to provide a chilled meat establishment, such as exists in the other colonies. The reason I find that meat is not sent here is that it must be sold immediately on arrival, whereas if a chilling establishment existed, a stock could be kept, and meat kept down to its proper price. So far as tinkering with the Tariff is concerned I am against it at present. I think it would be far better, although we are prosperous, to keep the Tariff as it is, until we are certain of our prosperity. I do not think anyone in Western Australia can say as yet that we are certain of it. If the Government have too much money, let them use it in building jetties, so that the stock in the North can be shipped. Not long ago a gentleman told me he had 10,000 fat wethers, which he could not get down because the steamer could not come alongside the jetty. For the present I shall oppose any tinkering with the Tariff. In regard to item 21, I must congratulate the Government on their determination to increase the telegraph communication. It has been a matter of reproach to us that the working of the lines has not been satisfactory, but I think the adjacent colony is as much to blame as we are, and I think the Government is doing what is fair by building the line half-way. In regard to the lowering of the railway freights, I quite agree with the desire of the Government to reduce the prices for conveying agricultural produce, but I do object to any alteration in the charges on the goldfields' railways. I saw a report in the papers that the Commissioner of Railways had agreed to lower the rates from 1st. July next. To me this seems hardly fair, when we remember that when a deputation waited on him sometime ago he refused to alter the tariff. I maintain that these goldfields' railways should pay not only

the interest and working expenses, but also a sinking fund which will pay off the principal in from 20 to 30 years. If it is the intention of the Government to lower the rates I shall oppose it as far as I can, because we cannot compare these with agricultural lines. We must remember, too, that the goldfields' train to Southern Cross has to leave Northam with seven or eight trucks of water, which come back empty, and that there is no return freight on the line. If there was, perhaps the present rates might be lowered. As to the removal of the Railway Workshops I think most people who have taken the trouble to visit them will agree that they must be moved; still, until it is proved to me that it is impossible to obtain sufficient land in Fremantle, or close to Fremantle, I shall strongly oppose the removal. Apart from the question of vested interests, I have made all the enquiries I can, and I find that most engineers agree that for cheap and effective management the workshops of the colony ought to be at a port. In South Australia they have been shifted from Adelaide to Islington, and here we propose to shift them inland; but the day will come, as it has in the other colonies, that another huge outlay will have to be made to shift them back. It seems strange if there be no land at or near Fremantle to which they can be shifted. I consider there is plenty of land, and I shall strongly oppose the removal. I am sorry to find in the list of Bills mentioned in paragraph 17, that an amendment, or rather consolidation, of the Wines and Spirits Act, is not alluded to. There are thirteen or fourteen amendments to the present Act, and not even the lawyers, let alone the publicans, can understand them. I trust the Government will take some steps in this matter, and bring in an Act under which publicans will be treated as honest citizens, which is not the case now. I might point out one or two features which should be introduced. The schedule of fees should be placed on a sliding scale; but as it is now, no matter what may be the position of the hotels, all have to pay the same fees. An hotel license should also be defined. Another most important matter is that with regard to the bottling of spirits. In South Australia every bottle of spirits sold must have affixed to it a label giving the name of the person who bottled it and where it was bottled. I shall bring this matter forward again, and I can then refer to several other matters which require to be dealt with.

I note that nothing is foreshadowed in the Speech with the reference to an alteration of the Education Act, and I must congratulate the Government on standing firm in regard to this question. When in the other colonies I made enquiries and I found that they are groaning under the burden of free education. In South Australia it costs £170,000 a year. The schools there were originally built for the benefit of the middle and poorer classes, but now the children of the rich attend, and consequently the poorer children do not get that attention which they should do. In discussing this matter with one of the highest authorities in South Australia, I found that so deeply did he feel on the question, that he thought the best thing they could do was to give all the teachers 12 months' notice, and after that give them the right to use the schools and make their own charges. In this way £170,000 a year would be saved to the colony. If we institute a similar system, before long the people will cry out against the burden upon the revenue. No doubt the cry raised is simply a religious one, and those who raise it deserve no good at the hands of their fellow men. There is one other matter I would like to refer to. I notice in the other colonies sides are taken in the Legislative Council for and against the Government. I think a Council should be free and independent as regards their position towards the Ministry. So far as I am concerned I am perfectly independent, and I shall always support any measures which are brought forward in the interests of law and good government, and shall reserve my right to criticise any measures, no matter by whom brought forward, which are not in the interests of the colony. Before sitting down I may say I am very curious to see how the hon. gentleman who occupies the position of leader of the Government in this Chamber is going to get over the position he took up last session against the Government on the Collie and Bridgetown Railway Bills. It seems to me that only yesterday the hon. gentleman was using strong language against the papers because they refused to publish his remarks, which were very strong against these railways, notwithstanding that he offered to pay for their publication. In a day or two the hon. gentleman will have not only to bring forward the measures, but he will have to champion them, and he will then be sorry that the publisher of *Hansard* did not serve him

in the same way that the papers did. For my part I do not think we have anything to thank the hon. member for in accepting the position of fifth Minister in the Cabinet, instead of second position—a position which the Minister in this House is entitled to hold. He has not added to the dignity of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. F. H. Wittenoom): It was not offered to me.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: In rising to support the Address moved and seconded by the Hon. Mr. McLarty and the Hon. Mr. Burges, I would like to point out that it gave me very great pleasure and great pride—Australian pride—in my heart at the opening of Parliament the other day to hear His Excellency's Speech. When I say Australian pride, I say it in a Federated sense, because I look forward to the time when we shall have become a great colony. This question of Federation is one which at the present time we are not fit to enter into, for the simple reason that we cannot allow ourselves to be submerged, as it were, to be done out of our rights, as we should be were it not for Protection. All the other colonies would rush in here if Federation were entered into, because Federation simply means Freetrade. There is no doubt about it, it is one of those things—although we don't want it mentioned just now—we look forward to in the future as one of the great steps which will make us a great nation, which the world will respect. We are not ready for it yet, and if we were to adopt it we should be simply driven out of our own lands. As the Hon. Mr. Burges put it, our farmers would have to leave their land and go to the goldfields. I am very glad my colleague, the Hon. Mr. Crowder, has referred to the matter of the dredger and the boring for coal at Albany. It seems to me that the matter of this lending Albany a dredger and a borer, is one that has too much of the poor relation about it. We ought to give Albany a dredger permanently until all the difficulties are done away with. We should give them a borer also until they prove that coal exists in the district, or that it does not. Albany is one of the best ports in Australia, I might almost say the very best harbour in Australia, not even excepting Sydney, because we know that heavy storms arise in Sydney harbour and that is the only harbour in Australia which can compare with Albany. Therefore, I do think that the Government, so far as taking away the dredger is concerned, should

reconsider the matter and should pause before they take a step which is likely to do Albany great injury. If steamers stir up the mud there, it must be clear to all that the work for the dredger is still not yet completed. There is no doubt that with the funds in hand we can afford to leave this dredger at Albany for a considerable time, and for my part I hope the Government will consider this matter twice before they decide to take it away. Then also with regard to the borer I hope they will find funds to bore for coal, and prove whether it does or does not exist there. These are questions which the Government should take into consideration, as they are to the interest of the whole colony, and although I mention Albany, it is because I look upon it as in such a position that work done there must benefit the whole colony, especially in the way of coal discoveries and harbour improvements. Another thing touched upon in this Speech is the establishment of a fortnightly service of steamers between Albany and Esperance Bay. This, in my opinion, should be a weekly service, but it is a step in the right direction. The time has arrived for a weekly service, and if we want a trade with Esperance Bay we shall have to offer increased communication between Albany and that port. The Government will also have to take into consideration the matter of the construction of a railway from Esperance Bay to Dundas. There is no doubt the discoveries in the vicinity of Dundas demand that a railway shall be made. This is one of the matters which will have to be considered at a very early stage. With regard to the Agricultural Bank, I am sorry that, living in the district I do, the benefits offered by that Bank do not reach us. It does not apply to our district generally, as it does not apply to the land of the West Australian Land Company, which Company owns most of the land in our district. I should have liked to see some scheme whereby the privileges of the Bank would have been extended to us. With regard to the lighthouses, I hope the Government will obtain the very best appliances possible. I notice that older countries are pulling down their lighthouses and building new ones, with better appliances, and, considering the very large amount of trade which passes up and down our coast, I think we should have the very best lights obtainable at the various points. I trust, therefore, that the question of expense will not be

taken into consideration when determining upon the nature of these shining lights, I am glad to see that for the benefit of my northern friends it is intended to open up Stock routes. For my part I cannot see why if meat can be bought in the Colonies, as the Hon. Mr. Crowder says, 9 lbs. of beefsteak for sixpence, it should be so much dearer here. Taking the Stock Tax, and assuming a beast to weigh, say 800 lbs., the duty is less than a halfpenny per pound, and if you put the duty aside it should be delivered here at one penny a pound, so there is plenty of margin after we pay the duty to have meat far cheaper than we have without touching this small tax. The tax on sheep is higher, taking the weight of a sheep at 40 lbs., and the tax at 2s. 6d. a head which is still less than a penny.

THE HON. E. McLARTY: The sheep weigh 60 pounds.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: Then calling it 60 lbs. the tax would only be halfpenny a pound. We see, therefore, that the Stock Tax is not a very heavy item. That is the proper way to look at this matter, and those who would sacrifice a great industry for the sake of a halfpenny tax are unreasonable, and have not the good of the country at heart. This question must be met in a different way than by taking off this poor little tax. In Tasmania the tax is £2 10s. per head, and there they are importing thousands of cattle from New South Wales. Therefore I do think our tax is a very small one, and in the interest of the Northern settlers I hope it will not be removed. With regard to the Fremantle harbour works, I have had an opportunity of seeing these works, and I am very glad to see the manner in which they have progressed. I wish we could persuade those pessimists who decry these works to visit them, and I am sure they would go away with a good idea of them if they are reasonable men. I think it one of the best works ever undertaken for our colony, and would justify even more taxation than we shall have to pay for it. They may cost a million pounds, but we can count upon their bringing millions in return for the outlay. I might tell you that I was somewhat against these works at one time, but my mind was open to conviction. I was very much astonished to see the strength of the works, and, therefore, I do think it would pay those who are prejudiced against them to visit these works and see for themselves their strength. The object is not to



benefit Fremantle, so much as to open up our beautiful river. If the other colonies had such a river they would do the same as we are doing. Look, for instance, at the Yarra, and the magnificent steamers that pass up from Port Melbourne to Melbourne. I hope to see shipping in this river. I do not see that Fremantle will lose much by it. My friend, the Hon. Mr. Crowder, looks upon it as a matter which should not take place. For my part, I think it would be a very grand thing for us to see shipping opposite us in Perth water, even though it would entail a certain amount of loss to Fremantle. With regard to the Government bringing in new Bills I would like to see a Bill brought in for a railway to serve the Williams. These Williams settlers for very many years have been cut off from railway privileges. I do not think any other body of settlers in the colony would have sat down so quietly and put up with the inconvenience that they have put up with. We all know that the Williams is one of the oldest settled districts in Western Australia, and I do think it would be only giving these people tardy justice to give them a branch line connecting with the South Western Railway. I cannot say which would be the best route, but should I say one that would go to Perth in the shortest distance would be the best. I would have liked to see, some promise of a dock for Albany. It is our only fortified port and the only one justified in asking for a dock. At any time a war might break out in which we should be to a certain extent implicated, and it is only right, that in the event of repairs being wanted, steamers should be able to go into Albany for them.

AN HON. MEMBER: Perhaps the enemy might go in.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: The port is fortified and they could not. I would also have liked to see another matter touched upon, and that is the purchase of the Great Southern and Midland Railways. I must say I am very sorry my hon. friend, Mr. Crowder, avoided this question, although at election time he made it a step to secure the votes of a number of settlers in our district. I have raised this question because I am disappointed at the hon. Mr. Crowder not bringing up this matter. He promised our people faithfully he would advocate the purchase of this railway. It simply amounts to this, he used it merely as a means of getting their votes. This railway, the Great Southern,

is the finest in the Colony, it is well constructed and well finished, and the whole thing is in thorough good order; therefore I do think the Government should try and take it over.

AN HON. MEMBER: It will not pay.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: It will pay. The time will come when the line will pay well. If it ever comes to pass that the Government do take over the railway, I would like them to take over the employees who have proved themselves able to work the line economically and well. I hope steps will be immediately taken by the Government to open up negotiations and to have the lines placed under offer to them. It will be admitted that these are the two best lines in the colony, and in time to come we shall have to pay twice the amount for them that we could purchase them for to-day. My object is to open up the country and to get the lines at a time when we can do so cheaply. I think it is the duty of the Government to enquire into the matter, and if possible to take steps which will open up these three million acres of land. With regard to the increased revenue, and the prospects of the Government, I would have liked to have seen a Bill brought in for the erection of new Parliament Houses. It seemed to me, yesterday, when members of the other House came down here, that they looked exactly like a lot of wethers put in a pen for a certain time until they were looked over. It seemed to be a most undignified position, and I hope hon. members will be unanimously in favor of erecting new Houses, something that we can be proud of, and something we can treat people in as we should wish to do.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: These are quite good enough.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: Not at all. Our Supreme Court is another matter which we all take pride in. We make laws from this place, and we should like to see them administered in a suitable building. As a country member, I hope that the Government will see their way to build both these Houses out of surplus revenue. I am glad to see that the Ecclesiastical Grant is a matter that is likely to be settled. I do hope it will be set at rest this time and that the Government will deal with the Churches in a liberal manner. I was very much astonished to hear the Hon. Mr. Crowder and the Hon. Mr. Burges take exception to the alterations which the Government propose to make in the Tariff Act. The Government propose to reduce the duties upon articles in

general use, not capable of being produced in the colony, and I think it is a most reasonable idea. Tea, sugar, and similar things we shall never be able to produce here. We want to increase the duty upon things we can produce here, and, whilst things are so flourishing, it is our duty to take the duties off things which we cannot produce. They say it will open up the Tariff Act. I do not see how we can reduce the duties without opening up the Tariff Act. They fear it because of the duty on flour and chaff, but the Government do not propose to take off the duty on things which can be produced in the colony. The time will come when the same over-production as is in the other colonies will trouble us here, but let us now take off taxes upon those things we cannot produce, and bear the taxes upon those things which we can produce. I must admit myself I have seen meat sold at three-halfpence and one penny per pound in shops in Sydney, and there is no doubt about it, that if we protect this country for a certain time we shall see the same thing here. I am very sorry to see there is such an objection to these reductions. I should have thought it would be a very popular idea. I hope those who express their disapproval of it will reconsider the matter. With regard to the reduction of the railway rates, this does not seem to me to go far enough; it will benefit the consumer more than the producer. There is no doubt about it our farmers cannot produce meat and pay the rents they do for their land. We have thousands of acres of land that will carry a sheep to the acre. I have proved it, but it will not pay to take up upon the present terms.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: For how long.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: For a year or until sold. The Government should encourage these people to clear their land, and the poison land especially. The Government propose to establish markets and cold storage in Perth, but nothing is said about Albany and other towns. It seems to me that one of the principal means of bringing produce into our cities and towns and thus enabling the working men to get things cheap, is to establish cold storage in all towns of the colony. If I had 10 lambs I could kill them and put them in a cold storage car, and sell them at a lower rate than could otherwise be done. This would induce people to send their produce to market. At present it is impossible to send butter to market, and it does not pay to make it, for if you

put it in the train it melts away and runs out of the casks. With regard to the railway rates to the goldfields, I do think if these are found to be unduly excessive we should reduce them. These people on the goldfields are striving hard to open up an industry there just as we agriculturists are doing. In conclusion I have to thank hon. members for the patient hearing they have given me.

THE HON. H. McKERNAN: In listening to the very interesting speeches to which the House has been treated on the Address-in-Reply, and particularly the speech of one honorable member to-night, I am reminded of something which occurred in this House during last session. I quite forget for the moment what the measure was that was before the House at the time, but the then Colonial Secretary referred to myself as being the only member sitting in Opposition. Until then I was not aware that there was any Opposition in this House, and I entirely endorse the statement made by the honorable Mr. Crowder, that there should be no Opposition, and that members should approach all legislative matters in a free and open way, with one desire to promote the best interests of the colony. I am also reminded in listening to these speeches of something which also occurred in this House, and that is the high ideal placed before the minds of honorable members by you, Sir, and I think also the honorable Mr. Hackett, that members should eschew all parochial matters. That, however, has not been the case on the present occasion. Every member who has spoken so far has alluded to small matters, which concern his own particular province, and which he wished to bring under the notice of the Government. I am pleased to be in a position to say that such is not the case with me, and I am happy to state that I am able to approach matters which are brought before the House in a spirit of impartiality, which I hope to see emulated by all honorable members. If there is any doubt in the minds of honorable members as to which side of the House I belong, or any notion that I am in opposition, that notion will be disabused rather abruptly after what I am about to say. I must join in the congratulations of previous speakers on the satisfactory condition of affairs within the colony at the present time. If we are blessed with a good financial position we are at liberty to express an unbiased view on the Speech before us. Little,

I am sure, can be said against the great amount of work contained in this Speech, and if the country has been hungering for it, surely, Sir, we find now we have got it, matter for contemplation and thought enough to occupy our attention for one session of Parliament. Perhaps the Government are right to give such a prominent position to the Federation of the Colonies as they have done, and I hope no hon. member will consider after what I am about to say with regard to Federation, that I am a faddist. I am a "federist." I hope no one will say I am a fuddist. I shall approach this matter in a calm and impartial spirit. The argument made use of in dealing with item 12 was 9lbs. of beef steak for 6d. The gentleman who delivered that information to the House is not a federationist, but he will admit that if 9lbs. can be had for 6d. under Federation, the people of Western Australia will reap similar advantages. But it is said in paragraph 4 that under existing circumstances the question is not a pressing one with this colony. That is all very well. It is not because most people are of opinion that Western Australia stands to lose more than she can gain by becoming portion of the Federal dominion, but that when people are educated up to the advantages of Federation they will find that Australia will be a gainer, and when they come to experience the advantages they will be glad that at this early period of our history they had said they were in favor of Federation. As has been truly said our markets would be over-run with produce. That is one drawback, but it is only a temporary one, and with the equalization of the production in all the colonies, the people of Western Australia would, in the end, undoubtedly benefit.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Import everything?

THE HON. H. McKERNAN: Under Federation there would be no such thing as importing, for there would be the advantages of free and mutual exchange. The people of Australia would undoubtedly stand to one another, and there would be no loss by Federation. In reference to paragraph 5, which states that the survey of the Donnybrook railway is in hand, and that a Bill will be submitted to us authorising its construction, I must say that I think the manner adopted by the Government to provide the funds has been somewhat peculiar. It will be within the recollection of hon. members how these funds were obtained, and it is unnecessary for me to remind them

of the method adopted by the Government. I do not think, however, that it is very probable they will ever get a Railway through Parliament again as they have done this one. In regard to the contemplated line to the Collic, I may perhaps have ideas which will not be acceptable to the majority of hon. members. I hold it is not the duty of the Government to lay down this line. If a deposit of coal is there, and to my mind there is a very satisfactory deposit, it is the duty of the Government to lease the property to private enterprise which would construct the Railway and deal with the coal. When leasing I need not explain that it is the duty of the Government to use every precaution to protect the interests of the Colony by securing a royalty. In regard to paragraph 7, we are told that the gold industry is in a very flourishing condition. This may not always be the case, and an idea has occurred to me by which we may aid the industry in a very effective manner. We know that when the head of the Government delivers an important speech, means are found to have it cabled to London. It makes a good impression and is a very good thing for the Colony, and I think we might use the cable for the purpose of sending to London our gold returns, so that they could be published in the financial papers for the guidance of British investors. An innovation in this Colony is that known as the Agricultural Bank. I was under the impression it was a Land Bank, but it seems it is not. However, it is pleasing to know, that it is working very successfully, although we have no return before us to show what is being done. It seems that the institution is admirably administered, although only in one part of the colony. Perhaps there has not been time for its patronage to have been extended further. If that is so, I am willing to give further time for its development. Now item 16. A Mint is always attractive, and it is an institution which has "caught on," in the opinion of the people of Western Australia. No doubt with large and regular returns of gold, a Mint may greatly add to our prestige, but we know that in addition to the first outlay, an expenditure of about £10,000 a year will be necessary for its up-keep. Are the advantages worth that? Considering the future possibility of an early Federation of the colonies, I think the Mint is a mistake, because, under the altered state of things of the future, only one Mint will be required—a Federal

Mint. The next item I will allude to is number 17. I find, among other things, that we are promised an Amendment of the Electoral Law. Of course we do not know in what direction it is intended to alter the Act, but I venture to express the hope that some clause will be found in it embodying the principle of payment of members. If that is done, I am sure hon. members will deal with it in a manner which will be endorsed by the country. We are frequently told by the head of the Government that he is not afraid to extend the franchise or to trust the people, yet at the same time the question of payment of members seems to come upon him and other hon. members as the proverbial red rag to the bull. I say, that if we are willing to extend the franchise, and are not afraid of the people exercising it properly, we should give them credit for electing only those who would do justice to their claims, and act in the best interests of the colony. The argument against adopting a principle of this sort is that certain persons will find their way into the Legislature. That is a mere fallacy, if we can trust the people in the first instance. It is satisfactory to find that there is plenty of money in the hands of the Government, and I am more than gratified to find that the Government intend to spend their surplus, not as they have in the other Colonies, in establishing a large Civil Service corps, and then after a time having a Black Wednesday or Black Thursday, but intend to devote it to remunerative works, or works of a lasting character, such as the building of jetties, the extension of railways, and more particularly, the purchase of rolling stock. Perhaps the most important item in the Speech is that dealing with the Tariff; there seems to be a strong difference of opinion in regard to this question. The argument generally used is that once the Tariff Act is touched, there is no telling where it will stop, but that seems to me no reason why we should not consider the matter. Hon. members are sent to this House to deal with the legislation of the country, and when they say "don't touch any matter," they put themselves in a peculiar position, and their constituents may possibly have something to say in regard to it. For my part I am not afraid of re-opening the question, and I would go to the extent of dealing with it in a way I am sure the people of the colony would appreciate. With an overflowing Treasury there is no reason why we

should continue to charge duty on stuffs we are unable to produce in the Colony. In regard to the Estimates, I notice there is always a desire on the part of the Government to placate some constituencies. In one place, a hospital has been built large enough for Perth, but, fortunately for the people of the district, it has not yet had one patient. I believe a promise has been given that a Court House and Gaol are to be erected in the same district, but I hope when the items come before hon. members they will deal with them in a proper manner. In regard to the contemplated reduction in the transit rates, I think this is a step in the right direction, and I join with those who have congratulated the Traffic Manager upon his management of the Railways. If this recommendation had not come up from him, his lack of courage might be questioned; but when we find that he makes the proposal himself, he is entitled to some appreciation for it.

THE HON. K. G. BURGESS: It was forced upon him.

THE HON. H. MCKERNAN: There is no doubt a reduction has been necessary for some time, because it seems ridiculous for the same charge to be made for a parcel from Perth to Fremantle, as from Perth to Bunbury. With this tariff it is not to be wondered at that the railways have yielded a large profit. It is mentioned in the Speech that some provision for providing for the sanitation of towns is to come before us. In regard to Perth particularly, there is no doubt the Government are to be encouraged for their efforts to aid the local authorities in dealing with the subject. There is no way of meeting this case except through the Government, because it is simply impossible to keep the city in a proper sanitary state out of the local rate. We find people from all parts of the world located in Perth, and we must have a proper system of sanitation, and it is only right that the Government should come forward and assist the local authorities with some of the funds at its disposal. I have now only to repeat what I said before, that I join with those who have congratulated the Government on the Speech which they have put before us. Before I sit down I may be allowed at this late moment to refer to a matter which came on me by surprise this evening. I refer to the death of my esteemed colleague, Mr. Henty. As a citizen he was we'll-known. He was youthful, full of vigour, and fired with an ambition to do what in him lay for the benefit of the country

in which he lived. I think all hon. members will recognise the character of the gentleman of whom I speak, and I can only myself endorse the utterance made use of by the mover and seconder of the motion for adjournment, and to add that his friends, who are legion, have my sincerest sympathy in their sad bereavement.

THE HON. S. J. HAYNES: I have much pleasure in supporting this motion, because in looking through the Speech I find I am in accord with a great portion of it. Certain items I differ with, and before I sit down I will touch on one or two of them. I must in the first place congratulate the Government on the healthy state of its revenue, and the condition of our credit. The floating of the loan in London at the low rate of interest is certainly a very sure guide as to the good position in which we are, in the old world's money market, and I trust our position will long continue so. So far as our revenue is concerned, I hope the Government will not be carried away by the present prosperity, but will go ahead cautiously; for rather than see the colony go ahead by a too forced growth, I prefer to see it go more slowly and surely so as to avoid the disasters which have overtaken the other Australian colonies. In paragraph 3 I notice that the surveys of the Donnybrook railway are completed, but on that question I hold the views which I did last session; still, if the Government can place before this House any details which will show the necessity of it, I shall support it. Last session the details were unsatisfactory, and would not warrant any business man in voting for it. Personally I cannot see that anything has occurred since last session to warrant the construction of the line, and I look forward with pleasure to the particulars which we shall no doubt get from the Government on the subject. If I can then support the line I shall be most happy to do so. It is pleasing to see that the coal deposits are turning out so satisfactory, but personally I am opposed to constructing any railway to a coal field. I consider that while every inducement should be given, and a reasonable expenditure incurred in testing the field to ascertain whether a true commercial coal exists, the actual development should be left to private enterprise. As far as my own views are concerned, I think it is better to throw as much as possible on private enterprise, because there is no doubt private individuals manage their business affairs in a closer and more economi-

cal manner than the Government. I notice that our goldfields are prospering and that they are increasing the output of the gold. Our goldfields are really the bedrock of our prosperity. They have induced a population to come here, and I trust we shall find in the end that they will remain and settle on our lands. At the same time, I am sorry to find that there is very little permanent agricultural settlement going on. We have good land, and I trust those who come here will be induced to stay. The Government have, I think, done justice to Esperance Bay by subsidising a steamer to that port. Although it may be premature at present to talk about a railway from Esperance to Dundas, ultimately it must come, for on account of the geographical position of Esperance Bay, the trade must gravitate to that port. With regard to the Fremantle Harbour Works, although I reside in Albany, I trust the remarks I shall make on these gigantic works will not be taken as those of one who has prejudiced motives, because I hope I can rise superior to that. The present Government did not commit the Colony to the gigantic scheme now being carried out, and which to some minds is only an experiment. It seems to me that to spend one and a half millions of our capital on one work is altogether out of proportion to our requirements. Besides this, it seems we are spending the money before we have seen the necessity for the harbour. It seems to me that we want something to ship before we make the harbour. I do not begrudge Fremantle or any other port any expenditure on harbour improvements, but I say, and I express it strongly, that the amount now being spent is altogether beyond the means of the Colony, and must be a drag upon us for many years to come. The dredge at Albany is doing satisfactory work, and is a means for inducing large steamers to enter the harbour, where they would not otherwise do so, and I trust the Government will not move it until a competent surveyor has reported that justice has been done to a harbour, which the Colony, as a whole, have every reason to be proud of. The construction of a Mint is a work I strongly object to, and shall vote against. If we read we shall find from the experience of Melbourne, what a luxury of this kind costs. It may add to our prestige, but I think we can get advertised well enough without paying £15,000 a year to establish a Mint. The Bills proposed to be introduced are not many, as far as numbers go, but some of them are of con-

siderable importance, and I am sure we shall carefully consider and deliberate upon them. I am glad that there are not many Bills, because it shows that the Government do not intend to emulate the other colonies by continually tampering with the law. I think, also, that if we have a few Bills we shall be able to consider them more carefully, and make better legislation. I agree with the Government in their desire to reduce the duty on certain articles in the Tariff. Considering the flourishing condition which we are in, I think it is only just that articles, which cannot be produced here, should be cheapened as much as possible, especially when they are such that they affect every one in the land. I also agree with the proposal for taking the export duties off pearl shells and sandalwood. With respect to Clause 24 of this Speech, while I should be happy to see a high state of health, not only in the City of Perth but in other towns, I am against the Government undertaking works for the metropolis or any other town at the public expense. I think the cost of sanitation in cities should be borne by the citizens, and if money is required it might be provided by means of some special provision in a Municipal Bill, by which the Municipality itself might raise the money. It would be unjust to those outside the cities and towns to make them contribute to sanitary schemes, and therefore I hope when this proposal comes forward hon. members will oppose it. In the past I have endeavoured to support measures brought before us without having any concern as to who introduced them, and I shall do so in the future. I consider there should be no parties in this House, and that each member should vote as he thinks best for the general interests of the colony, without reference to party, or the Province he represents. I have not indulged in any personalities in respect to the change of views on the part of some hon. members. No doubt some have arrived at a change of opinion for good reasons, and I do not intend at this stage to draw attention to them. I trust during the session hon. members will vote for measures with the same intentions that I do, namely, without regard to the past, and after dealing with them on their merits.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Sir, I have much pleasure in meeting hon. members again, and in seeing that the same mutual feelings exist as they did last session. I hope they will continue so, and I trust that at all times

we shall be actuated by one desire—the interests of the Colony, and that we shall allow no personal ill-will or ill-feeling to enter upon our deliberations. I congratulate both the mover and seconder of this Address on the sensible and able speeches they have made. I consider the Colony has reason to be satisfied with its position, and I congratulate the Government on the disclosures they have been able to make in the Speech. I will now briefly allude to several passages contained in it, and give my views on them. It is highly satisfactory to know that the finances are in a sound condition, and that the loan has been floated at so great a premium, considering the reduced rate of interest. I quite agree with the expressions which have fallen from several hon. members in regard to Federation. By Federation the colony would lose a great deal and gain nothing. We should be entering into competition with colonies whose industries are fully developed, and which are producing more than is required. They would then flood our markets with their produce, to the detriment of our own farmers. That being so, I shall oppose Federation, considering, as I do, that it is against the best interests of the Colony. The Public Works Department deserves our most careful consideration. Many public works are carried out without that care and attention being given to them I think there should be. They are constructed without consideration of the requirements of the districts. I have seen, in several instances, buildings erected at twice the cost they should have been, and then without the necessary facilities. In the matter of hospitals, for instance, I think the medical men in the district should be consulted as to what is required before any money is spent. The hospital at Newcastle cost quite £3,000, and it should certainly not have cost more than £1,500. I understand that at the Northam Hospital the accommodation required has not been provided. These are matters which require careful attention. When money is expended, care should be taken to give the most advantages it will possibly provide, and on no account should money be expended simply for the purpose of expending it, because the people in the districts look forward to getting some benefit from the buildings, as well as from the expenditure of the money. The Collie coalfield railway is referred to in the Speech, and from what I have heard, I think there

must be a sufficient supply of coal to justify the expenditure. If that be so, the only course will be for us to ascertain which is the most practicable route to run the line. We know that at the present time railways can be constructed cheaper than has hitherto seemed possible. The low rate at which the Coolgardie railway was taken is sufficient evidence to show that is the case, and we can therefore reasonably believe that the railways to Bridgetown and the Collie may be constructed considerably under what has been estimated. In order to ensure these railways being built for the least possible money, I would advocate that a more thorough examination of the country be made by the surveyors, who should take with them some gentleman, resident in the district who knows the country. I think if this plan were adopted we should save a repetition of many of the mistakes of the past. It is only reasonable to consider that the progress which our goldfields are now making may not continue. There are many reasons why our goldfields have so rapidly progressed, among them being the depressed state of trade in the other Colonies and in other parts of the world. This has induced persons to rush here, whereas the same inducement some years ago would have been overlooked. Even now the other Colonies are producing as much gold as we are, and yet we see men coming over here to prospects which are no better than those they have left. We cannot, therefore, anticipate the population to flow in in the future in the same degree as it has in the past, and we must, therefore, make hay while the sun shines. We should now lay by all we can save from our revenue, and endeavour to provide the interest and sinking fund for the railways and other public works we are constructing. The importance of the Dundas field, I am glad to see, has now made itself apparent to honorable members. Still, with the future probability of the connection between Esperance Bay and South Australia, I for one, though connected with Esperance Bay, would be sorry to see a railway connecting it with Coolgardie, inasmuch as I see that it would be opening the door to our receiving the whole of the supplies required from our Eastern neighbour, instead of from this Colony.

**THE HON. C. A. PIESSE:** It is only proposed to take the railway to Dundas.

**THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER:** If it got there it would soon be carried on. It is from these goldfields that we hope to get a market

for our produce, and if we afford the opportunity, instead of our supplying it, the people of South Australia will. With respect to the purchase of the Western Australian Timber Company's concession, I think the Government have done the right thing; but still I cannot close my eyes to the fact, that considering these arrangements were drawn up by professional men, we ought not to have been in this position. In future, we trust that mistakes such as these will be avoided, and that in the agreements which are entered into there will be no flaws which can be taken advantage of to the disadvantage of the Government. At the present time very few can express an opinion on the advantages of the Agricultural Bank. It may be beneficial, but I am not very sanguine, inasmuch as that I think that those who can derive any benefit from it are not men with enough means to enable them to enter into agriculture to an extent sufficient to make it pay. These men take up small holdings and do not know what it costs to bring land under cultivation, or what it involves to purchase machinery. It would therefore take a far larger amount than the Bank can reasonably advance on the securities which can be given, to enable men without capital to succeed. I should like to allude particularly to the advantages of securing a proper stock route, both for the North and the South. I notice that nothing has been said about the South, and I do not think it should be omitted, inasmuch as from Eucla we have sheep stations all along the coast, and a stock route is required just as much as it is at the North. We are looking forward to supplying the goldfields' market. We know that we have enormous quantities of sheep and stock at Kimberley, and we should see that they have proper appliances to bring them to market, so as to avoid the necessity for importing. If meat is to be had at moderate prices, we must give facilities for bringing it to the centres of population. I cannot see the necessity of importing meat when there is already plenty in the colony.

**THE HON. F. T. CROWDER:** We are not producing it.

**THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER:** Yes, we are, only we want the facilities to enable us to get it to market. Meat is always scarce at this time of the year, but still we are capable of producing what is required. When we consider the great disadvantages that stock-

owners are laboring under from the low rates obtainable for wool, it is only reasonable that we should allow them, if it is possible, to get a fair price for their meat. If they cannot get a fair price for their meat the only alternative is for them to throw up their stations, because with the low price of wool it hardly pays for shearing the sheep. I hope hon. members will bear this in mind, and consider that the squatters require some little protection as well as those engaged in other industries. The harbour works at Fremantle are an undertaking of great magnitude, and I consider that the way they are being carried out is a subject for congratulation, although the sum sufficient to complete them, when named, is enough to make us tremble. I feel satisfied with the work done at Princess Royal Harbour with the steam dredge, and I think the people of Albany have good reason to thank the Government for what has been done. We have every reason to congratulate ourselves on the fact that the Midland Railway has at last been completed, and I hope it will be of as much benefit as we wish it to be. I cannot help saying that there has been nothing but difficulty with it up to the present time. It has shut up a large amount of land which otherwise might have been open for selection, and settlement going on upon it. The Mint is an institution which, I think, it is undesirable for the Colony to enter into. It may be a useful thing to coin our own gold, but we know a Mint entails an enormous expenditure, and I think for the present we had better let it alone. The Ecclesiastical Grant is a matter we shall have to deal with, and I hope the Ministry will deal liberally with the Churches, because I consider it the duty of the Colony to support religious instruction as well as other instruction in our schools. I consider that at the present time the clergy are poorly paid, and when sweeping away the Grant a liberal allowance should be made. I agree that it is necessary to duplicate the line to South Australia via Coolgardie, and the fact that it is necessary shows to what extent the Colony is progressing. I earnestly hope that very shortly wool will be bringing better prices than at present. In the matter of the removal of the railway workshops, I think it is our duty to support the opinions laid before us, and have them shifted to the site proposed, where there will be plenty of room, an unlimited supply of water, and other advantages. I am sure every-

one will be in favour of doing everything that is necessary to obtain water supplies throughout the colony, and in connection with the sanitary arrangements we must remember that Perth is not the only town that requires attending to. Mr. Foulkes has told us that wealth is nothing without health, and no doubt, had better care been taken at Coolgardie, there would have been less fatality than was the case last summer. As regards railways, no country can succeed without them, and I hope to see them extended in this Colony wherever inducement offers. I hope, in conclusion, that the Colony has arrived at a stage of permanent prosperity; that the session will close as it has commenced, with good feeling all round, and that measures will be agreed to which will be of future advantage to the Colony.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): As the representative of the Government it is with some satisfaction that I have heard the remarks of hon. members upon the Speech of His Excellency the Administrator, and I may add that they offered some reward for the heavy efforts of Ministers during recess, to work the colony in such a way that the finances are in a flourishing condition. Some hon. members referred to the necessity for new Parliament Houses. I only wish we had them now, because our Chamber might then be a little warmer than it is. I must take this opportunity of thanking those two gentlemen—the Hon. Mr. McLarty and the Hon. Mr. Burges for proposing and seconding the Address-in-Reply. I feel sure everyone will appreciate the way in which they did it, and commend them for the well-chosen language in which their speeches were couched. I myself felt a good deal of sympathy for the Hon. Mr. McLarty, because he found himself in an awkward position, and because he had hardly any light with which to see his notes. It would ill become me to take up much time at this late hour, but there are one or two matters upon which I must say a word or two. The Hon. Mr. McLarty raised an objection to our proposal to reduce the taxation on some articles of food, and I have heard several other hon. members make similar objections. The Government, however, is of opinion that they must do something to benefit the large masses of people, but at the same time without interfering with the revenue to any great extent. With this object in view we purpose reducing the tar-



ation on the necessities of life which cannot be produced in this colony. We only propose to deal with such articles as cannot be produced here, and that being so, it will be obvious that we do not propose to deal with the question of the duty on stock. A question is to be asked in another place as to whether the Government intend to repeal the Stock Tax, and the answer that will be given will be a negative one, for the present at all events. Hon. members will thus see that there is a policy in the action of the Government. Another question which has been touched upon is that relating to the railways to the Blackwood, to the Collic. Some hon. gentlemen have stated that as regards the latter railway, at any rate, it should be left to private enterprise; but so long as the present Government remains in office they may rest assured that this will never be allowed, for it is their fixed intention that no railways shall be built otherwise than by the colony. The question of the price of meat has been referred to a good deal this evening; but the question involves a policy, and does not merely depend upon the small amount of duty involved. If hon. members look at the matter carefully they will see that the Stock Tax is only a means of protection to the Northern settlers of this Colony, and it is the only protection they can get. Everything the settlers of the North consume is taxed more or less as a means of protection to the producers of the South, and it is only fair that in return their one production should receive a little protection. If the question is looked into it will be seen that the duty really means that we get better sheep and cattle brought here. The freight is 3s. or 4s. per head on sheep, and the duty 2s. or 3s., and thus it would never do to ship small and inferior sheep. It is obvious that shippers must get the largest animals they can, because it would never pay them with high freights and duty to ship sheep, for instance, weighing only 30 or 40 lbs. each. I might here state that I was once in the position of having to buy 500 sheep in the Victorian market, for shipment here during the last drought, and I may say, I took particular care to secure the best sheep I could. I paid 21s. a head for some of them, and with 7s. freight and 3s. duty, the price was a high one, but they averaged from 80 to 120 lbs. weight each. Hon. members will thus see that it would never do to ship inferior sheep, and we must therefore always get the

best meat. The tax to the consumer is infinitesimal and is hardly felt. Even if it were taken off, the consumer would not get the advantage of it; neither would the butchers, but the whole of the duty would go into the pockets of the man who imported the stock. Although the duty is a matter of small moment to the consumer, it means a good deal to the producer in this Colony. Before the drought sheep were 9s. a head. Unfortunately from the effects of the drought we lost something like three-quarters of a million sheep, and there was the loss of the lambs as well. Had the Colony not suffered this disaster, our producers would have been able to supply the large influx of population consequent upon the development of our gold-fields. Still, with fair seasons, we shall, in two or three years' time, be in a good position again, and I trust that this Stock Tax will be allowed to remain in force, until at any rate the stations are well stocked again. It has been said that it is not the duty of the Government to take in hand matters of sanitation on behalf of cities and towns, and with this view I entirely agree. I take it that sanitation and water supply are matters of municipal concern, but in this colony the corporations are not so supplied with money as to be able to undertake works of this magnitude; and it is the desire of the Government I represent, to find out from the various colonies what schemes they have adopted, and to ascertain in what way the Government can help the corporations in pushing forward the matters of sanitation and water supply. If hon. members will read the Speech carefully they will see that it does not say the Government intend to undertake these works. It says:—"Owing to the increase of population, the necessity for improving the Water Supply and Sanitary arrangements of the larger towns has become a question of much importance, and a comprehensive scheme for dealing with these matters is being considered by the Government. My Ministers are anxious to assist all local efforts in the above direction, and a contour survey of Perth is now being carried out with the object of enabling reliable estimates to be prepared for any drainage or other works that may be necessary in connection with the sanitation of the metropolis." This is very comprehensive, and it means that the Government will assist those who are desirous of helping themselves. I hope hon. members will not go away with the idea that

it was intended only to apply to Perth and Fremantle. It is intended to apply to every town which is prepared to undertake any such work, and not to one or two isolated places. The Hon. Mr. Burges has asked why the Government has not gone in for deep boring. The Government desired to do so, and called for tenders, but there was no response. If the Government had undertaken it, and had attempted to put down a trial bore of 2,000 ft., the cost of the machinery for the one work would have been enormous; but if we can get someone else to find the capital and we find the payment, it would be advantageous to every one. If we can only induce the owners of boring machines to bring them here, it is quite possible that they may be induced to stay, because after the Government have had a trial bore some of the Gold Mining Companies might also be induced to test their properties in the same way. I do not think I need touch on any other remarks made by hon. members, and I will only now thank them for the kind manner in which they have entertained the Speech. If, however, hon. members will pardon me, I should like to make a small reference to my hon. friend, Mr. Crowder. I do so in all good feeling, and without any desire to say anything offensive. The hon. gentleman has taken the earliest opportunity of attacking me in the position I have taken up. He wanted to know how I was going to explain my position now, as compared with my position last session, in regard to the Blackwood and Collie railways. I do not intend to explain my position. I do not consider that I am called upon to make any explanation. The hon. gentleman alluded to the independence of his views; he claimed the right to think, speak, and vote on all questions independently, and I claim the same privileges as the hon. member. When there is a demand for an explanation with regard to my conduct or the position I have taken up, I am quite prepared to give it, but, at present, I feel only bound to make peace with my own conscience and my constituents, and I may say that I am, at the present moment, easy in mind on both points—certainly as regards my own conscience. The hon. gentleman twitted me with being inconsistent, a fault which he is not entirely free from himself. He remarked to-night, that it was absurd to attempt to do anything with the coal, because it was costing us £2 a ton to get it, and yet he objected to making a railway to the field so as to cheapen

the cost. Then we find the hon. gentleman objecting to have the Tariff interfered with, so as to reduce the duty on articles of food which cannot be produced here, and yet as regards one article of food,—meat—he says, take the duty off.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: Because you don't produce it here.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Take another point. The hon. gentleman twitted me with regard to my position in connection with the Blackwood railway. The hon. gentleman himself has told us that he now intends to support the railway and yet he twits me for doing the very thing he is about to do himself.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I beg your pardon. I said I would support it if the line were taken to Bridgetown, but not if it were only to be taken towards Bridgetown.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Another small point. The honorable gentleman entirely objects to Federation, and yet he wants Sydney meat at 9lb. for 6d. I do not object to the honorable gentleman being inconsistent. He has as perfect a right to be inconsistent as anyone else, but I do not see why he should twit other people, when he himself is in a position in which he should not throw stones. In regard to any change of views on my part, or in regard to my occupying the position I do here, I shall be prepared to justify them at the proper time and place, and, whenever I am fairly asked for an explanation, an answer will be forthcoming. I trust the remarks I have made concerning my honorable friend will be taken by him in the same spirit in which I took his. I again thank honorable members for the manner in which they have received His Excellency the Administrator's Speech.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 10.40 o'clock p.m. adjourned until the following day at 12.30 o'clock p.m.