

to be an honour then, and I feel it more so now, that on the only occasion on which this great man visited these shores it was my privilege to welcome him on behalf of the people of Western Australia. It is a matter of very deep regret to me that he was unable to carry out his purpose of coming to Perth and still farther making himself acquainted with the people of this State, as he promised to do on his next visit. However, He who rules all things has ordered otherwise, and now we have to mourn the loss of one of the greatest men the Empire has ever known. I think he may very rightly be bracketed with Cecil Rhodes, the great empire-builder, and I am certain his genial character, his deep earnestness, his sincere desire for the welfare of the people not only of New Zealand but of the whole of Australasia, link him to us with bonds that will long be felt and long can be trusted and tried. I have very great pleasure—a melancholy pleasure, I admit—in supporting the motion which has been moved.

Question put and passed, the members standing.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE PREMIER moved "That the House at its rising do adjourn until Tuesday next, 26th June, at 4.30 o'clock p.m."

Question passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at 5.14 until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 26th June, 1906.

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon. H. Briggs) took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PRESIDENT: Public Accounts for the Financial Year ended 30th June, 1905, accompanied by the Fifteenth Report of the Auditor General.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1, The Mining Act, 1904—Amendments of and Additions to Regulations. 2, The Mining Development Act, 1902—Regulations for the purchase of Auriferous Copper Ores at Phillips River. 3, Fisheries Act, 1905—Regulations. 4, Goldfields Water Supply Administration—By-laws.

MOTION—LATE PRESIDENT'S RETIREMENT.

RECORD OF APPRECIATION.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) said: It is with a feeling of considerable regret in one sense that I have to move the following motion:—

That this House desires to place on record its regret at the retirement of Sir George Shenton from the Legislative Council and from the office of President, and expresses the hope that his health may again permit him to give his valuable services to the State.

I think members will agree with me that our late President, Sir George Shenton, deserves well of his country, having devoted the best days and hours of his life to occupying public positions. We can hardly hope—I think it is rather too much to expect—that the last part of the motion, namely that his health may so improve that he will come back into public life, will be realised. However, I feel glad that Sir George Shenton has decided to retire, for this reason, that it is very hard for a public man, after he has long occupied a public position, and particularly the public positions Sir George Shenton has occupied for some thirty odd years, to continue actively in the work. We generally find that a man

goes on until it is too much for him. We had a very sorrowful example of that the other day in the death of the late Right Honourable Richard Seddon; and I think that Sir George Shenton, considering the state of his health, acted wisely in showing the courage to relinquish his position. As I have said, I think Sir George deserves well of his country; and Western Australia should be proud of such a son. Speaking more perhaps from the point of view of an Australian, I think that Australia as a whole indeed has no cause to be ashamed of her public men, when we find that during the Federation period she could put forth, as she has done and does to-day, the Prime Minister and a majority of the Ministry, the Chief Justice, and in fact the whole of the High Court; men of whom a country of much greater population than Australia might, I consider, well be proud. And in one of the States forming that Commonwealth, namely Western Australia, we find even a still better example. I know that when I came to Western Australia some 13 years ago I was forcibly struck with the fact that the majority of the first Ministry in the little State, which then had I think a population of 60,000 to 70,000, consisted of men native-born, one of them being the gentleman to whom I am now referring, the late President of the Legislative Council, Sir George Shenton; and I may mention all those public men who have always fitted themselves so well for the positions they have held. I think it is a record of which any small country like Western Australia should be proud, even at the present day. Just a month or two back Sir George Shenton occupied the position of President. We have had the positions of Premier, Chief Justice, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and President of the Legislative Council, the four highest offices in the State with the exception of that of Governor, occupied by four native-born Western Australians; and that is a record to be proud of. Western Australia ought, I say, to be proud of her native-born public men, and more particularly Sir George Shenton. Before sitting down I would like to call upon Dr. Hackett, who is the oldest member of this Chamber and has known Sir George Shenton for a number of years, probably longer than

any other member—[Dr. HACKETT: No.]—to second this motion.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): I think I am not quite the oldest acquaintance and friend of Sir George Shenton, yet I can speak from close upon a quarter of a century's experience, which in most cases is sufficient to test the quality and calibre of the men with whom one comes into contact. I accept the duty which my hon. friend has placed in my hands with the utmost pleasure, for it enables me to rise in this House and testify to the universal regard in which our late President was held. Sir George Shenton was one who had the honour of being the Leader of this House, and he eminently deserves well of this country. It so happens that the whole of Sir George's public life covers exactly, up to the present day, the political history of Western Australia. He first gave his talents and knowledge to the country of his birth when, in 1870, a partially popular constitution was accorded to Western Australia. Not only was he a trusted speaker in the old Legislative Council, and one whose words in the Council were listened to, but his devotion to his work was such that when we passed into the fully popular stage, when Responsible Government was granted to us, it was with universal approval that he was offered the position of Colonial Secretary and Leader of this House; first in the long line of honourable and able men who have held that position. I shall not take up time with a theme which most of us know so well, Sir George Shenton's political history; but I would point out that he rose steadily from step to step from private member to Minister, from Minister to President; and at all these various stages of advancement he continued to hold the high respect and esteem of those who knew him best. I should like to point out that not alone was he satisfied with giving his time and his labour to the Parliament of his country, but he took a leading position in municipal life here for over a dozen years. Farther, though I do not think we have a right to speak publicly of a man's private life, yet on an occasion like this I should like to refer in passing to that unbounded and unstinted hospitality of which I believe Sir George Shenton has been the donor to a

greater extent than almost any other member of either House of Parliament. This praise is not invidious: there are other members for whom as much can be said. But nobody has been more truly hospitable, not only to residents of the State but to visitors from outside, than Sir George Shenton. I should like also to refer, if only in a breath, to his connection with his own church, of which he has been one of the most devoted, active, and successful leaders whom the church has been able to boast of since its foundation in this State. As to his work in this Council, I leave members to form their own opinion; for each is as well able as I to judge of its value. But I would point out that from the time he entered Parliament, or rather, I would say, since Responsible Government was granted, Sir George Shenton, except for one or two much-needed and all-too-short holidays, was never absent from his place in this Legislative Council. In seconding this motion I speak as a friend, as the oldest member of the Legislative Council, and as a man who has for the last quarter of a century closely watched public affairs in this State. By the retirement of Sir George Shenton we lose a man respected by us and by the State at large; we lose a citizen who has done good service to his country; and we beg him to believe that he carries into his retirement the sincere desire of all his friends that he may be long spared to enjoy that repose which he has earned so well. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. H. Briggs): It may not be unbecoming on my part, as the successor of Sir George Shenton, to join in the tribute of appreciation of his distinguished services, to recognise the zeal and ability with which he has discharged the important duties of many high offices in this State, and also to admire the firmness and judgment with which he has maintained the dignity and privileges of this House. He has given unremitting attention to the business of Parliament, and his kindness and urbanity have won for him the esteem and respect of hon. members. Midst our regret there is the consolation that Sir George Shenton is not altogether lost to us. With us still are his counsels and his example: these outlive the inter-

ference of electors, and also the six years' effluxion of time mentioned in the Statute. I feel sure that hon. members will welcome Sir George Shenton as a frequent visitor to this Council, and will be pleased to hear that he has courteously accepted my offer to provide for him, when he does visit us, a seat on the floor of the House. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Question put and passed.

On motion by **HON. J. W. HACKETT**, ordered that a copy of the resolution be transmitted to Sir George Shenton.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

Fremantle Jockey Club Trust Funds (Private), introduced by **Hon. M. L. Moss**.

Jury Act Amendment, introduced by **Hon. W. Kingsmill**.

RETURN—EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.

HON. W. T. JOTON (East) moved:—

That a return be laid on the table relative to the Chapman, Narrogin, and Hamel experimental farms, showing—1, The acreage cleared and uncleared and cost (if any) of the land comprised in each farm. 2, The amount paid for buildings annually since inauguration to the 30th June, 1906. 3, The amount paid for machinery, implements, and tools each year. 4, The amount paid for clearing, fencing, and other improvements each year. 5, The amount paid for stock and all other products each year. 6, The amount paid in salaries annually to 30th June, 1906. 7, The amount paid in wages annually to 30th June, 1906. 8, The amount received from sales of stock and other products of the farms each year. 9, The numbers and value of the various classes of live stock and other products at the end of June, 1906. 10, The number of students on each farm each year.

This return was asked for in no spirit of opposition or antagonism to the Department of Agriculture; for it was fairly well recognised that some at all events of the branches of this department were doing considerable good. But the return ought to prove interesting and instructive, and not too troublesome to prepare, though the questions raised were numerous; for the experts employed to manage these farms had doubtless a precise and concise system of account-keeping which would show them every year exactly how they stood. The exact financial result of these enterprises, until

the end of June, would be valuable information to the House and the country.

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan) seconded the motion. The information desired would doubtless be welcome to the country, which would be glad to know that these farms were being conducted on the best lines, and that there was at least an attempt to make them profitable as well as useful. No doubt these institutions were training a number of young people who would make earnest, industrious, and successful settlers, and would set an example to other farmers. As the heads of the experimental farms were supposed to be experts in their various branches, they ought to be able to afford much information of value to settlers generally.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): The Government being desirous of giving the fullest information, had no objection to offer to the motion; but as some time would elapse before the 30th June, the return could hardly be expected immediately. It would be made up as soon as possible.

Question passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

SECOND DAY OF DEBATE.

HON. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan): Following the example of the mover and seconder of the motion for adoption of the Address-in-Reply, I desire to add my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your advent to the honourable position you now fill. Your long experience in the House as Chairman of Committees assures us that you have all the qualifications necessary to follow one who has ably presided over the House. Also your experience as a private member demonstrates it; and I trust you may be long spared to occupy the position. I also desire to congratulate the Leader of the House, as this is the first opportunity since the Assembling of Parliament that I have had of doing so. I am sure the hon. member's elevation to his present position is satisfactory to the country as a whole. It is particularly pleasing to me, because I formerly represented with the Colonial Secretary the North-East Province. His knowledge of parliamentary procedure, though not lengthy, still is good, and I am sure that his

ability and practical grasp of affairs will stand him in good stead in dealing with any business that comes before him in his office. I am also quite sure that the Minister will receive generous consideration from members of this House. There is one other, a gentleman who sat by my side for the last six years, whom I desire to congratulate, and that is the hon. Minister, the Hon. C. A. Piesse. I am particularly glad he is now sitting in front of me. Not that I wish to take an unfair advantage and to attack him in the rear, but because he was rather troublesome at my side. I am quite sure the Ministry have availed themselves of his services because of his great knowledge, not only of the Land Act, but of all matters appertaining to agriculture, and his advice to the Ministry will prove very valuable. When I was Minister for Lands, not only the Hon. C. A. Piesse, but other country members, seemed to delight in putting what I was going to say were fiendish questions to me with regard to the Land Act. It is my turn now; and there are a few things I will want to know later on. I am not going to spring them on the Minister now, but I will give him fair notice that at an early date I desire to know many things relating to agriculture, such as fruit flies, poison leases, cattle dipping, catching dingoes, inoculating rabbits, shipping honey, growing wattles, shearing angoras, land drainage, Holstein bulls for Jersey cows, Italian peas, value of manures, ensilage, mangel wurtzels for camels, and the best hens for winter laying. My support will depend a great deal on the information I get on these subjects. I have others I will ask later. But, seriously, I have great pleasure in congratulating the hon. gentleman on the position he occupies as hon. Minister. I am sure it is pleasing to the members of this House, as the hon. member has endeared himself to all members. I am pleased to note that the mining industry is so satisfactory, and that the dividends paid last year were larger than at any time during the history of the goldfields. This is shown by the fact that we have been able to treat lower-grade ores on a larger scale and on more scientific principles, proving that although the ores are not of such great value, we have such quantities of them that it makes us feel

we have a long and almost permanent life for our goldfields. The absence of any new finds is a matter to which the Government and the Mines Department should pay particular attention. It is idle to think that all the rich finds were made during the early life of the goldfields.

HON. F. CONNOR: What about the North-West?

HON. C. SOMMERS: I am sure it will have a great future. I was pleased, indeed, to listen to the remarks of Mr. Connor with regard to the North-West; for he is one well able to speak concerning it. I take great interest in this subject. I think we can scarcely realise the possibilities of our North-Western territory. We should be particularly liberal with regard to the encouragement of prospectors. I think the conditions with regard to leases taken up by prospectors are altogether too stringent. If a prospector takes up a piece of ground away out in practically waterless country, no good for agricultural or grazing purposes, and which, until he has put his pegs in, is not worth a penny per acre, we find the Government imposing a tax of £1 per acre for the ground which is taken up by the prospector not only with the idea of enriching himself, but also with the idea of inducing others to go out there.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: He can take up ground on his miner's right.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Yes; but when he takes up a lease we find that his surplus capital has been expended in developing the ground to that stage; and unless he gets liberal terms, he must either abandon the lease or seek aid from people to whom he has to give half or three-quarters of the property. I would suggest that the prospector get the land at a nominal rent for the first year, with a sliding scale for the first three years. Also, the conditions of manning the lease should be made much more liberal. In the first year I think it should be quite sufficient to man the lease for one month, and in the second year I think two or even three months would be quite sufficient. Let us consider the difference between the selector and the prospector. The selector need not work the land for the first

year, and the improvement conditions are spread out year after year, while the land he takes up is valuable for either grazing or agricultural purposes, being quite a different class of land to those areas I am speaking of away out in waterless country, which are not valuable until the prospector puts his pegs in. If my suggestion were adopted it would enable the prospector to become more settled. Perhaps a man with his son could work the lease for a month and then go down to an agricultural district where he might own a farm. At any rate, it would be an inducement for him to have one. In this way it would settle people in the State, and make them feel more comfortable here: not so floating and shifting as the mining population have been in the past. The prospector might make a good farmer; or with the conditions I suggest, he might have his family residing in cooler districts and work his lease when the opportunity presented itself. A railway is proposed from Starvation Harbour to Ravenshorpe. If it were constructed it would do a great deal of good. Many of us know that there is a good piece of country there, particularly in respect of copper. The railway would be short, perhaps not more than thirty or forty miles; and I believe there is a good harbour possible at Starvation Harbour. I prefer that the railway should be constructed by private enterprise. It is too isolated a system for the Government to embark on, because it would not connect with any existing railway. I believe that if encouragement were given we would find the railway would be constructed by private enterprise. At the same time I would see that stringent conditions were laid down as to the mode of constructing the line, and that a purchasing clause should be inserted in the agreement so that at any time it would be possible for the Government to resume the railway, say, at cost price. A railway would not only encourage those people willing to put their money in the district, but would also encourage the development of perhaps a new field altogether. I am quite sure that if the railway into the North-West country could be constructed by private enterprise it would assist the State. There is not the slightest reason why we should lock up the country; and if the

Government are not prepared to carry out the work, not being satisfied that they have sufficient knowledge of the country, and if it can be found that private people, having faith in the country, will build the railway to develop the district, I say let them push on with it immediately. With regard to the Land Act, I am glad to notice that the Government intend to amend it, and that they also intend to push on with light railways. I am certain that the construction of these railways will mean a great increase in the cultivation of lands, not only along the railways but many miles back from them. The Government might fairly increase the price of first-class land; because it is now altogether too cheap. If we increased the terms to 80 years and added 5 per cent. interest and charged £1 per acre, it would mean an increase to the revenue and would not deter settlement for one moment. I would advocate more stringent conditions in regard to cultivation and the general keeping-up-to-the-mark of those people who have already selected. In order to prevent a great deal of dummieing that is going on, I think that on all new surveys it would be well to have the survey pegs dated so that the work of the inspectors would be made much easier, and so that persons looking out for land would be enabled to ascertain how long a piece of land had been in possession of a selector, and would have reason, if they saw the land was not being improved, to inquire why improvements were not being carried out. I notice that encouragement is being given to induce people to settle in the State; but while that is being done I think we should give much more encouragement to our own people to settle on the land. There are thousands in the Eastern States who would be glad to come here if we offered the same inducements that we offer to people of other countries, while on the goldfields there must be hundreds of men out of work and desirous of work, who, if taken in hand and shown a little consideration and given a little assistance, could clear land which they might afterwards select. Much good might be done and a great deal of the poverty existing now might be ended. An amendment of the Land Act to enable lands to be cleared, such as suggested by the Government, would be

a step in the right direction. The man put on to clear land which he afterwards desired to select would see that he worked well and did as much work as he possibly could do in the time, knowing that he had the possibility and every right to acquire the land himself. By doing this we would do a great deal of good. It would be well if the Government took the opportunity of establishing a bureau at Fremantle, right on the wharf. There is a small office there, and sometimes an officer of the Government saunters down to it with the idea of interviewing people. What I advocate is that a sum of £2,000 or £3,000 should be spent to put up a place where there would be an opportunity of the State exhibiting all sorts of information, maps and literature. A fairly good staff of capable men could be kept there, so that those who have a few hours or a day to spare in passing through could spend it in seeing what we can do. It would be a splendid advertisement for us, and it might be a means of inducing people to tarry longer with us. Persons may have been delayed in their journey and have had to give up some arrangements; anyhow it would be a good advertisement for this State. The great success of the sale of the subdivision of the Midland Railway Company's lands recently in Perth shows that there is a good demand for property, which is most encouraging. I think it is most encouraging all round to see that this company at last has unlocked the land which has so long been locked up. Coming back to the metropolitan area, it is a matter of very great importance and of gratification, that the Government have already made a start with the deep sewerage scheme, which has been badly needed for many years. One can hardly realise until one goes away from Perth and sees other comparatively small towns having all the conveniences of modern times dealing with sewerage, and then come back to Perth, so up to date in all other matters, with its trams, electric lighting, and fine buildings, to find it is so far behind newer towns in the disposal of its waste product. There is no doubt whatever that the septic tank system will be successful; I think there can be no doubt on that point. One thing that goes hand in hand with sewerage and its disposal is a good supply of water.

Every summer we find how deficient our supply of water is, how scarce it is, and how inferior in quality. While we have the magnificent goldfields weir and the water running away every summer, why we do not make use of it is a mystery to me. During the last twelve months there has been an average of one and a-half million gallons per day used on the goldfields. We could take three and a-half million gallons every day from the Mundaring dam, and thus do away with the disability under which we suffer in regard to water. We have a great deal of disease and sickness, visits of the plague and typhoid, and first of all it is directly traceable to the impure quality of the water we have to drink. By adopting my idea we can help our goldfields friends in reducing the price of their water, and we can help the country by paying the interest and sinking fund on that magnificent scheme. While we are constructing the weir to supply Perth and Fremantle with water, which will take a great many years, in the meantime I do not see why we should not tap the Mundaring Weir, so that we should have a bountiful supply at once. There was a letter in the *West Australian* newspaper yesterday, written by Mr. G. A. Lefroy, giving some very useful information about the sewerage scheme. I hope the Government will look into the matter and see if they cannot give Perth and Fremantle a supply of water. I hope the Government do not intend bringing in any fresh taxation. There is not the slightest reason why we should not go in for a little more borrowing. With Mr. Connor, I think our credit is sufficiently good to push along with our public works. We might let the people get over the depression and be fairly on their feet before we have more taxation. I hope this session will not be prolonged to such an extent as the session was last year. While we have work let us do it vigorously, and get on with the business of the session before the hot weather comes in. People have no desire for new legislation, and, except some amendments to existing Acts and one or two urgent Bills which will require attention straight away, there is no need for a great deal of new legislation. The matter of electoral reform is urgent and is badly needed. As one who

has recently been before the electors, I know how defective the rolls and the law are, and how badly it is administered. I hope there will be some amendment in this direction. I have no desire to detain the House longer.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM (North) : I desire to preface my few remarks by congratulating the President on the position he has been placed in recently, and I feel confident that he will carry out the duties eminently satisfactorily. I should like also to extend my congratulation to the Premier, who at so young an age has attained so high and dignified a position. When we remember what we may call his immature age and the very short parliamentary experience he has had, I think very great credit is due to him to be placed in the position of trust; and I hope he will long remain to occupy that position with dignity to himself and benefit to the country. I am not prepared to extend my congratulations to the manner in which the Premier has formed his Cabinet, I mean those associated with him. I do not do that with any personal objection to any of the Ministers, but I do it for this reason : there has been an unfair omission of any representation of the northern part of the country in the Cabinet. I think I am safe in saying there is not a single Minister who knows anything about the North. There is not one Minister who has been much beyond Perth. We find this portion of the State with its large interests and industries neglected. I do not think any Minister knows anything about stock-raising and squatting, and there is not a member in the Ministry who knows anything about farming. [MEMBER : Mr. Piesse.] I am not including the useful Honorary Ministers. There is not a member who knows anything about pearling. Yet the whole of these industries are to be carried on without anyone in the Cabinet to look after them. We know how very important representation is. We have only to look to the recent Fremantle election. We do not know what terrible loss may have accrued if the successful candidate did not happen to be a Minister. What about the portion of the northern territory which has not a representative in the Ministry at all? It really makes me, representing the north-

ern part, a little afraid that it may not be looked after as it should be. There is a huge territory requiring a great deal of development, and I think one of the things the Premier should have done was to see that the North was represented. Another point that makes the omission more marked is this. In the last Government there were two Ministers, one who represented the North, and one who knew no more about it than most of us. Yet we find, for some reason or other, both these Ministers were retired from the Government, and the consequence is we have not in the Cabinet anyone to look after the interests of the North. And if we look at the Speech, there is very little said about the North. In one place there is something said about artesian bores, which is a very important matter; and there is a paragraph also which congratulates the pastoralist on the bountiful rainfall. But this bountiful rainfall in a large measure has fallen only in some small portion. Here is an instance of the knowledge which the Ministry possess of the North. From the Murchison upward the squatters do not know how to keep their stock alive. What reference is there in the Speech to the railway which is wanted in the North? We have a large portion of the territory which is notably auriferous and which has been inspected by the geological authorities, yet there is not a word whether the Government are going on with the railway or not. I hope their silence will be excelled in a manner by their actions. I confidently hope they will make up for their inexperience by showing what can be done by people knowing nothing about a subject. The next question that seems to me of importance is that of Federation. There is a little paragraph in the Speech of a very startling nature, that I think might be described as some of the chickens coming home to roost. We are told in that paragraph that this State may possibly have to give up the sum of £430,000 a year. I have no hesitation in publicly stating that I have always been opposed to Federation. When the question was brought before the people in Western Australia I was in England and unable to take any part in it, therefore I feel no responsibility and no hesitation in stating it, and I say at the present

moment it is one of the biggest mistakes Western Australia ever made. I believe in Federation in theory. I believe that five or six States close together, with interests in common, can be worked more cheaply and more effectively by a common government than as scattered units. Were I a South Australian or Victorian, or living in New South Wales or Queensland, I feel that I should have done my best to have brought about Federation, but I would have advocated a central Government of such a nature as to decrease to a large extent the expenses and representation of the States; otherwise I see no object in amalgamation. My objection to Western Australia's joining the Federation is purely a geographical one. We are separated from the other States of the Commonwealth by many hundreds of miles of unoccupied country and rough seas. We have nothing in common with those States, and therefore I think we made a very great mistake in joining, especially at a time when our development was commencing to be successful and they had worked out most of their resources. I can quite understand their coming with very sympathetic remarks and saying how pleasant and proper it should be, that we should all be Englishmen, brothers of Federation, and joined together. These are matters I can thoroughly understand, but I cannot understand Western Australia's joining in the Federation where we keep up a Parliament now costing something like eight millions a year. [HON. G. RANDALL: Eight millions?] Something like that, is it not? I mean the cost of Federation is something like eight millions a year. And yet it is found necessary, although we joined this federation of the picked men of Australia, to keep two Houses of Parliament for Western Australia, consisting of 80 members, to legislate for 250,000 people. I am certain it could be done just as well with a board of directors of six people, with a good chairman. As far as I know, the Federal Parliament has not done a single action which justifies its existence, but it has done several that really authorise its speedy extinction. I am quite certain if it goes on as it is there will be a great deal of trouble. Under these circumstances I think we want to be most careful. And in

addition to the left-handed legislation there, we have the undignified sight of the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition contradicting and writing about each other every day. These are facts to which perhaps we do not attach much importance, but it goes out to the world that there are these contradictions, villifications, and so on. I think the time has arrived when this State should make every effort it possibly can to retire from Federation. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I am one of those who believe that no effort should be spared, but that every effort should be exhausted to try and cut away from Federation, for the simple reason that we are not in a position to take advantage of it. I consider that the Government—I recommend this to the leader of the House here—should take steps at the very earliest possible moment to find out whether or not they cannot retire from this Federation, even if it goes to the extent of sending a requisition to the Home Government. I have been pleased to read certain portions of the Press where writers have put their views forward very ably, and given the strongest reasons for retiring. They have not only done that, but they have stated they were prepared to back up those reasons by giving a certain amount of money. I saw £2, £5, and £10 mentioned. I can only say that if there is any reasonable chance of success, taking any reasonable measures—not what our friend suggested the other day—I will be prepared to enhance the subscription by £100. These are my views, and I commend them to the Government. We are tied up with this Federal Parliament, and it is doing no good to legislation. It threatens us now with a loss of £433,000 per annum, a loss which means the difference between prosperity and otherwise to us, and the Government should take some steps to see if they cannot leave us to go alone, on our own resources. I am not frightened to go alone. I believe we could get along very well indeed, and I feel confident that the majority of the people of Western Australia will come to the same conclusion. Another reference has been made in this Speech which is of extreme importance, and that is in connection with immigration. It says there is a steady and increasing stream of people coming into the State—something

to that effect—and I can only hope it will continue for a long time, because what we want amongst our other requirements is a large number of immigrants. No doubt population is the one thing Western Australia wants, and I hope this system will continue, particularly at the people's own initiation. I am, however, one of those opposed to any frantic efforts being made to introduce immigrants whether they are suitable or not. I believe Government money for the introduction of immigrants should be spent in a very careful manner. I should put them to the test of having a little money to begin with—[THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: So they do]—and should make it a condition that they should not go on until they had had a little experience. It is bad enough for a man to come from another country to this and go on to the soil here with a little money and no experience, but God help him if he has neither. I am quite certain he could not do good, and I will only say as a proof of my argument: Take any half-dozen men who know anything about farming in this country, and set them down in England, and ask them to farm. How much could they do before they had had a round of seasons? Therefore, I say before we spend a lot of money on the introduction of people with or without means and without experience, it would be well for the Government to take every care. We have Canada, for example. There they have gone in considerably for immigration, and I am told on evidence which is indisputable that before many years there will be a most tremendous number of failures amongst the people whom the Government have put on the land—some of them—and helped with money. This should be a warning to us to be careful. I have heard people talking of spending millions, or £500,000 a year, and all this sort of thing, to introduce immigrants here. Upon my word, it is really amusing, and I read with the greatest pleasure one or two letters in the Press about a week ago. I think one of them emanated from that esteemed district to which my hon. friend the Minister belongs; an admirable letter it was. Amongst the statements was one that the writer considered that before a man attempted to go on a platform and talk about farming he should be com-

pelled to do two years' farming. I think that man was a wise one, and I hope the idea will be carried out. What I suggest is this: If the Government are going to spend any large sum of money in the introduction of people to be put on the land for farming purposes, introduce a certain amount of legislation also to enable capitalists to come here and invest their money with some confidence. I do not think it is at all fair that all the competition should be placed on one class. If you are going to have all the farmers here subjected to the strongest competition, the result here, as in other places, will be that produce will become almost a drug, and be extremely cheap. On the other hand, if you introduce some capitalists, as I say, and make things attractive for capital, causing them to be happy when they come here, they will then probably go in for factories or manufactories of some kind. There will be consumers then, on the one hand, and on the other hand we will have the producer. If you introduce only the men on the land, you have no consumer. I can quite understand this matter is one that appeals to those who go with the Labour party. The Labour party would naturally say this is correct, although I must admit that some who belong to the Labour party do not believe in any immigration whatever. Those who do, however, say "We do not mind what the immigration is; put them on the land"; and the consequence is that as long as you do not interfere with the wages anywhere, it does not matter to them what competition the farmer gets, if the produce becomes cheap. The Government should take the very greatest care with regard to the class introduced. They want to see that they are placed in a portion of the State where they will probably be successful, and they want to see at the same time some security given to capital, so that we can have side by side protection and consumption. [Hon. J. A. THOMSON: It is for the Federal Parliament to give protection to the people who will establish industries.] If there is such a quantity of produce that it is not consumed locally, we have only then to rely on export. I have heard people talk of building up a very large export trade, but probably those people who talk about it do not know what it

will cost or how much profit will be made out of exporting. Of course I am alluding particularly to wheat. I have no hesitation in saying that the only two classes of people who could make wheat pay for exporting are first of all the large proprietor who could employ 10 or 15 teams and have a proper system of overseers, and then the man who has a large family, and does not require to employ labour at all. The ordinary man who occupies a farm and pays wages will never make wheat pay for export. He may make fruit or something of that kind pay, but certainly not wheat. I do not propose to make more than a passing reference to the fact that there will probably be a deficit in our finances at the end of the year, and I feel sure the Government are having some little trouble in thinking how to make ends meet. The consequence, as I see from the Speech, is that it will be necessary to resort to a certain amount of new taxation. Of course new taxation is the first thing that would suggest itself to a Treasurer or a Government in trying to put the finances right. I would suggest that rather than do that they turn their attention to the expansion of our resources; make our resources larger, give every facility for developing them, and then I think it will not be quite so necessary to impose taxation, because the more taxation we put on the more unlikely it is that people will come here. Of course money must come from somewhere, and it is very easy to put a ~~tax~~ on this, that, and another thing, and very often it is property which is the first to be taxed. It must be remembered that it is the investor we want here, and therefore his interests must be looked after a little, and every man who puts money into the country must be made to feel that he is going to put it there under fair conditions, and that he will not be brought here under one idea, and in a few years have to live under another. The two principal industries in this State, in my opinion, and the two which want the most constant care and attention of the Government, are the mining and the timber industries, and my object in making these remarks is that these two industries are the means of bringing new capital into the country without interfering with it when it is here. The products they

bring forward are all sent forth into other parts of the world, and it is of the greatest advantage that we should be able to sell those things which bring in money from elsewhere to be distributed amongst the people. Because here we have a case in point, somewhat similar to that which I have been trying to argue; for those who were occupied in the industry are entirely consumers, and not what I call producers. They take the chaff, the oats, and other food products; whereas the fruits of their labour go out of the country, and bring back the money required by those engaged in the farming industry. That is why I say that I think those industries the most important. All must admit that the gold and timber industries have been largely responsible for the development of this country; and one need only look around in order to be assured that they are responsible for the enormous strides made by the farming industry, and also for the great development of the pastoral industry—a development which, as a consequence of the high price of meat, promises to continue unabated for some time to come. As these results are in my opinion due to the gold and timber industries, these industries should receive adequate consideration from the Government. It is almost superfluous to refer to what the gold-mining industry has done for the country. From the year 1892 till 1896 there was, I believe, an unprecedented influx of people to this Colony. There is hardly another part of the world to which people ever came more quickly. With the people came the finest machinery and any amount of money. Our gold production advertised our resources as nothing else could have advertised them. No newspapers, useful and marvellous as they are, nor anything else of the kind, could have pointed out to all quarters of the globe the importance of Western Australia so clearly as this fact was advertised by our large gold finds. And so well has the industry developed that we are able to point with pleasure to the fact that in 1895 the gold-mining dividends were the largest that have ever been paid. Therefore I think members will agree that the gold-mining industry is at the bottom of all our prosperity. There need be no trouble about inducing the immigration

of foreigners and others, so long as we can keep gold-mining prosperous, and can continue to develop our gold mines. If we could find another Kalgoorlie, we should have another inrush of people, without having to bother about assisted immigration. Therefore I suggest that the Government do everything possible for the development of gold-mining; and amongst the things possible, let me again urge the Colonial Secretary not to forget that little railway in the North-West. There is a portion of the country almost unknown at depth. It is known that mines have shown good gold on the surface, and so far as the workers have been able to get down; and that only cheap transit is needed to insure a much greater development. If this railway is built I feel confident that there will be a reign of prosperity in that part of the country, as there has been elsewhere. That is why I regret that the railway is not more definitely referred to in the Speech. Now I come to the timber industry; and this is another matter of great importance. A large sum of money has been put into this industry, as into gold-mining; but unfortunately our timber has not advertised the State so well as has our gold. Before making any remarks on this subject, I would remind members that I have been intimately associated with both these industries. I was for four years Minister of Mines, when gold-mining was commencing; and I did everything I could for its development. Moreover, I have been for some years a director of what is known as Millar's Karri and Jarrah Company, or the Combine; and, therefore, I know something about timber. But my position in the first case was that of a Minister of the Crown; and my position in the second case is of an entirely advisory nature. I have not a penny of interest in the company, therefore I am entirely independent; and in these circumstances anything I say here is said simply in the interests of the State. Regarding Millar's Karri Company all members will have noticed that there is much controversy and considerable correspondence in the Press. The dispute I have taken rather seriously; because I was largely responsible for the raising of a great deal of the money which has been wasted in Western Australia. While I was Agent General in London, among

many British capitalists whom I met were those interested in timber; and I guaranteed to them in the name of the Government that any capital invested in this country should be looked after and protected, and that the rights of all shareholders or debenture-holders interested would be respected. Members will therefore understand my present anxiety in connection with this company; and when we think of what it has done for the country, I can only hold it up as an illustration of the fact that capital is not at all well treated here, especially if we intend to do in the future what we have done in the past—try to draw capital to our shores. The capital of this company amounted to £1,650,000. It paid something like £1,500 a day in respect of wages, railway freights, wharfages, fodder, and so forth. Nearly every penny of this sum was spent in the State. Surely Millar's is what may be called a fairly capitalised concern, which should receive some consideration from the Government. Yet what has been the treatment of this company? Some years ago there were eight or ten timber companies in the colony, and they found that they could not, without some combination, advantageously carry on the jarrah business in other parts of the world; therefore they formed a combine, so as to save some of the expenses and to compete in foreign markets. The Governments of our sister States, when this was being done, helped their timber people considerably by reducing railway freights and wharfages, and by giving them accredited agents in different parts of the world. But what did our Government do? Raised the freights higher than they ever stood before, and this at one of the most critical times in the history of the industry—at a time when our timber people were trying to capture the Indian trade in sleepers, and the South African trade, in the face of severe competition. Therefore, whilst we had to compete for our business abroad, it took us all our time to look after our interests in this country; and to many of the companies the strain was serious. Then the labour troubles have in many respects made our position very difficult, with the result that the British investor is becoming badly frightened, especially when he reads in the Press a correspondence which

shows nothing but hostility towards him. The Combine was not formed to secure a monopoly, but to work the timber so as to put it in the markets of other countries to compete with other timbers, while at the same time returning some interest to those whose capital was invested. Five or six per cent. would have satisfied anybody, but this the investors have never received; and therefore, in the circumstances, they are naturally much disappointed. Anyone who cares to ascertain the particulars can read the article in last Saturday's *West Australian*, by the general manager of the Combine, who sets out every detail; and the reader must admit that the company has not been well treated. It is most unfortunate that a company which has put so much money into Western Australia, which has endeavoured to develop one of its resources, should have to meet such great hostility; and if I wanted an example of the hostility with which it is met by a certain class, I should have only to refer to the treatment extended to Mr. A. J. Wilson, M.L.A. He being a member of the Labour party was sent to the Eastern States to verify or to disprove statements which were made and contradicted here. He went there and confirmed those statements; yet, though the statements are confirmed that there the railway rates are lower, the wages smaller, and the hours longer than in this State, nevertheless we are told that Millar's Company is making a fortune, and getting prices which it should not get. In these circumstances I have brought forward this subject, not in the interests of the company—because I do not think my action will be useful to the company—but to show distinctly that capital is not getting fair play; and that if it is not to receive fairer treatment in this country, capital in other countries had better be left alone by us. If this State wishes to attract capital, give it fair play when it comes here; or else let us say that we do not want it at all, and abandon the country to socialism. Let us have one or other policy, but do not let us try to have both. Millar's Company is not the only case in point. We have the Midland Railway Company, which has never had fair treatment. Here are two companies largely and influentially represented in London, the

place from which we wish to get capital; and yet they are treated in a manner which I think would cause any member of this House, if he were connected with them, to sacrifice all his interests and go out. If we want capitalists here we must not treat them in that fashion. We must give them fair play, or not have them here at all.

HON. J. A. THOMSON: We are not permitted to do as you suggest. To reduce the railway rates would be practically to give a bonus.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: I am not asking Parliament to give them anything. All I have said is that at a critical time the railway rates were raised. I do not ask the Government to lower the rates. All I say is that the company has not had fair play, that it has suffered much hostile and undeserved criticism; and I wish to put the matter fairly before the country, to ascertain whether or not it is desired that capitalists should come here and be fairly treated. I do not know how the fair treatment is to be secured. I shall not longer take up the time of the House. I feel confident that the members of the present Government will do their best for the development of the State. There is no doubt we shall have much trouble in connection with Federation, which I fear will be for some considerable time a millstone round our necks. I can but say that in the interests of the country I have pleasure in seconding the motion.

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan): I wish to add my congratulations to those already expressed to you, Mr. President, and to the Leader of the House representing the Ministry, and also to the Honorary Minister. The Governor's Speech does not call for very great consideration or remark. The Speech is somewhat indefinite, and the subjects mentioned are some of them of no great importance. The whole thing is, how they are to be treated. We are left in the dark to a considerable extent as to what are the views and opinions of the Ministry of the day in regard to these things. No doubt by and by we will have before us the various measures proposed to be introduced for the development of the country, and then will be the time for us to go more deeply into these matters when we thoroughly understand them. We do not know on what lines

the Ministry are going to proceed in regard to some of the measures suggested here, but I can promise the Minister that we shall require the fullest information on some of the subjects mentioned in the Speech, so that we may be enabled to understand the drift of them and to give our views in a way that will be helpful to the Ministry of the day and for the benefit of the country at large. I am quite sure that this hon. House, as it has always done, will approach the subjects placed before us with one desire—for the benefit of the country. It is a non-party House which will not take up any position in order to embarrass the Ministry of the day or to protract debates, but in a businesslike way will deal with the questions put before it, and members will be guided by their common sense and experience, and also by the position they occupy of being altogether apart from party politics. I was greatly interested in the speech of Mr. Connor, and I followed him with considerable pleasure, inasmuch as I could hear him very distinctly. I sincerely congratulate him upon the ardent and earnest way in which he advocated the interests of the constituency he was sent to the Legislative Council to represent. When the hon. member was sketching out a programme for the Government to take up—a very sensible one I think it was, and very many of the proposals will possibly commend themselves to members of the House, and to many people in the State—the thought came into my mind, "I wonder if the hon. member has totted up the little bill which will be the result of the little measures he proposes for the country." I made a rough calculation in my own mind, I thought it would be ten millions.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was only for the North-West.

HON. G. RANDELL: It was principally for the North-West. I am hardly inclined to think the Government, progressive as I think they call themselves, and liberal as they are, and desirous of doing all they possibly can for the interests of the country, will be prepared to take up measures for one part of the State, as mentioned by the Leader of the House, to the extent as I think would be needed for carrying out the programme of the hon. member. I do not know

whether the Government in this Speech which they have put into the mouth of the Governor have not sketched out a sufficiently large programme—one that I think they will find very difficult to compress into 12 months at any rate. We were told the other day, that since the departure of Sir John Forrest from the State we have had six or seven Ministries in rapid succession, and it makes one think of a little passage in the Book of Kings we are all acquainted with:

So Tibni died, and Omri reigned.

Members will find that, if they look for it. One Ministry retires and another succeeds rapidly. Last year I went farther than almost any member in congratulating the country on having in power a really substantial Ministry, with three years before them of honest labour in the interests of the country; but here we are met to-day by a new Ministry and a new Premier! I regret this very much, because I was hoping that a good many things that occur with a new Ministry would be all over; for instance, running about the country and visiting the different parts so that Ministers may become acquainted with the different parts of the State. I believe to a large extent they should listen to the members of Parliament sent here to make them acquainted with the wants and needs and resources of the different parts of the country. The Ministry would thus do just as well as running about themselves here and there and everywhere over the country, and neglecting, as they must do, the administration of affairs of government, and leaving it, I was going to say, but it is not quite so bad as that, to the tender mercies of under-secretaries, so that the State would be governed by under-secretaries. From a public point of view I think that is undesirable indeed, and I hope we will find a Ministry in office—in fact I think we can congratulate ourselves on having a Ministry which is a working Ministry, and one that will give attention to the affairs of the State, giving them earnest and honest attention, and acting with the greatest expedition, for thereby we will have the best results from such a combination as we have in office to-day. I do not wish to inquire how it came about; I do not want to know; but I am sorry it has occurred, because it has left

an unpleasant feeling in the minds of large numbers of people in different parts of the country. There are one or two things in the Speech to which I wish to refer. Never mind about the bountiful rains—I do not know anything about them—but one part of the North has certainly had a bountiful rain—I speak of the De Grey River and the Pilbarra District. There are one or two questions here to which, perhaps, I may be allowed to refer for a minute or two. Of course there are other matters of importance, I do not wish to underrate the value of any of them, but on these two particular things I desire to say a word or two. They are the tax on what is called “unimproved land values” and the “alteration of the Constitution Act.” These are very important. I do not know as yet the meaning of unimproved land values, and I want to mention to the Ministers present to-day that this House will—I shall at any rate—require to know the definition of the term “unimproved land values.” I can understand very well taxation on unimproved land.

HON. M. L. MOSS: That is not what they mean.

HON. G. RANDELL: I have said in this House before, and say it again—though perhaps I am wrong and saying it through ignorance, and may be enlightened—there is no such thing as unimproved land values. If we tax unimproved land values, we will need to go back to the Crown grant at 10s. an acre or whatever the land was sold at.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The present unimproved value.

HON. G. RANDELL: Then that is the improved value of the land, or the land has been improved in value by somebody else. I know very well the hypocrisy of the term. Members here will want it thoroughly explained—at least I hope hon. members are of the same mind as I am, that we will have it thoroughly explained in this House. We are not opposed to taxation. I dare say if there be any necessity for it no true citizen of the community would be in opposition to it. No doubt in the future there will be an income tax. No one, I suppose, would complain about paying that tax, though I think it is a very objectionable one; but at the same time it seems to me as just a tax as could

possibly be imposed, to make people pay according to their ability. Of course we can never impose taxation to fit every individual, because so many circumstances must be taken into account, and what may be a heavy tax for one may not be for another, and what may be a crushing tax for one may not be felt by another.

HON. J. A. THOMSON: It is the same with the Customs.

HON. G. RANDELL: I do not think so, but I am not disposed to argue that, especially as we have no control over the Customs duties at present. I will only say that they are high enough in my opinion. I do not believe in a Customs tax being imposed beyond 20 per cent. unless in exceptional circumstances—such as, of course, tobacco and spirits. You can tax them as much as you like. It does not trouble me. It is a very good thing that those who smoke and drink should bear taxation for others. I speak of this matter as a sort of warning to the Ministry, that if the Bill survives the ordeal of another place, when it comes down to us we will give it most careful consideration, which we give to any Bills that may be introduced here, especially in connection with the development of the country. The amendment of the Constitution Act is another matter. I hope it will be carefully considered. We know what is behind the proposal—a thing that was referred to on the hustings lately, and very unnecessarily I think; because so far as I have been able to gather from the reports of their speeches before their constituents, members have never been asked the question, and it has only been referred to here and there.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It was asked at Fremantle.

HON. G. RANDELL: Yes; and I hope the answer will prove profitable to the Ministry of the day. Apart from that, as a matter of principle we should take as great care of the Constitution as possible. They say, "Tinker with the Customs as little as possible." I agree with that, because one upsets and disarranges business in doing so. If there is any necessity, we should do so. The Ministry of the day, responsible for the good government and progress of the country, should not hastily attempt to

take up these fads; because they are only fads among a few, though a very noisy few who get their views into the newspapers now and then and impress the minds of people who are not so impressed with the state of things much more than they should do. But there is no injunction, so far as I can see by the result of the recent general elections, to take up the matter of amending the Constitution in regard to the position of the Legislative Council. I hope that these few remarks will make a due impression on the Minister, and that he will use his best influence as a member of the House, and one desirous of protecting its privileges; because if we alter the status of the Legislative Council it will be a very bad thing for the workers of this country. I wish to support the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE (North-East): While regretting that Sir George Shenton has retired from Parliament, I desire to congratulate you, Mr. President, on obtaining your position, and I have every reason to believe that you will perform the duties in the high and honorable manner you have previously conducted the House as Chairman of Committees. I trust you will long live to enjoy the honour. I notice that reference is made in the Governor's Speech to the lowering of the gold yield. In the same Speech we are told that the dividends have increased. I think we can generally congratulate ourselves that mining is to-day attaining great perfection. The fact that the gold yield is less while the dividends are greater, is one evidence that the profession of the mining engineer is coming to the fore with the cheaper treatment of ore. I am hopeful that the present Minister for Mines (Mr. Gregory) will introduce legislation that will be of greater assistance to the prospector than the present Mining Act provides. Mr. Sommers, when speaking with regard to mining, referred to the charges for mineral leases. As a matter of fact the statement is not quite correct. He said the prospector paid £1 per acre when taking up a mineral lease; that is not so. The prospector only pays 5s. per acre for the first year for a mineral lease. In my opinion that is quite sufficient. I think when a miner or a prospector takes up a mineral

lease the first two or three years' rent should be nominal. The first charges are generally high. As soon as a man attempts to go prospecting, taxes appear. He is taxed before he takes out his lease, because he has in the first instance to provide himself with a miner's right. [THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Quite right too.] Yes; it is small but sufficient. When a man goes farming, he is not asked to take out a farmer's license; then why should a man be asked to take out a miner's license? Certainly his chances of success are not so great in taking up a mining lease as when taking up an agricultural lease. I am hopeful that the Minister in his generosity will make the charge, as far as a mineral lease is concerned, smaller. There are many prospectors in the eastern districts at the present time working mineral claims that are not paying their way. They put more money into the ground than they take out. Where mineral leases are not paying the owners should not be asked to pay the exorbitant amount of £1 per acre. [HON. C. A. PRESSE: The farmer is in the same position.] I am hopeful that the Government will either build railways from the mining centres to the coast or allow private enterprise to do so. The country is by no means opened up sufficiently, and I think encouragement should be given to those willing to build these railways. The country will stand a greater population than it at present enjoys. I know on the best authority that Ravensthorpe is going to open up well. There is every prospect of farther settlement taking place there. I hope the Government will assist the people who are willing to build these railways, or else build the lines themselves. I agree with previous speakers, that the Government should not act on the dog-in-the-manger principle and debar other people from constructing the railways, when the Government are not prepared to build the lines themselves. There is another important matter in the Speech, in regard to the deep drainage of Perth. I wish to mention this matter to-night, because I believe the Government intend to institute the septic tank system. I have heard many opinions about the septic tanks, but my only experience has been where I have happened to come into contact with the locality in which septic

tanks are situated, and I can assure members in many instances it is not pleasant. I think a great deal of the disease that permeates Perth is brought about by some of the septic tanks we have. There have been complaints about the septic tank at the side of Parliament House, and there are septic tanks in the neighbourhood where I am living which are a menace to the health of the community, and the stench that comes from them is most objectionable. [HON. J. W. WRIGHT: Report it to the board of health.] I have done that; still we find no improvement. All last summer complaints were made to the Health Department with respect to the septic tanks for Parliament House, but at the end of the summer they were just as bad as ever. In a country like this where we have the ocean so handy we should go in for a deep drainage scheme right away. The late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor prepared plans for a deep drainage system, and I do not see why the Government should not go on with those plans at once. If we had not the ocean handy, we might then look round for the patent ideas or new ideas for the drainage of the city.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What would be the cost of the ocean outfall system?

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: That I do not know.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What would be the cost annually?

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: The cost, I believe, would not be so great as the cost of the septic tank system.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: About one-third.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: Anyhow, I intend to ask the Government to lay on the table of the House the plans prepared by the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor. I think members should be given the fullest information as to the septic tank system. I for one do not intend to take for granted that it is a safe system, for I do not think it is. I have it from a medical gentleman of this town that the septic tank at Subiaco which is close to a dairy, is the cause of a lot of typhoid ranging about Subiaco.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT: Name it.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: The hon. gentleman is evidently an advocate of the septic tank system. I think fuller information should be given us with

regard to the septic tank system for Perth. I cannot help referring to the manner in which the late Government treated the country in the premature resignation, I may term it, of Mr. Rason. Mr. Randell has referred to this matter, and rightly so too. I think it was distinctly unfair to those members who were contesting the Legislative Council elections at the time. I think most of us—there might have been one or two exceptions—were being opposed by Labour candidates, and it was distinctly hard to explain the grasshopper tactics of the late Premier: I cannot refer to them in any other manner. He did not seem in my opinion to study anybody but himself, and for that reason I say that on occasions of that kind the least that can be done is not to throw the country into a state of turmoil when elections are pending. I farther enter my protest on that matter against the manner in which the Premier resigned, and also the subsequent tactics of some of the Ministers.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I do not think that is fair. He placed himself in the hands of his party.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: It was not fair to the constituencies at that time. I am quite justified in speaking of it. Sir Edward Wittenoom has mentioned the question of Federation and our likelihood of losing £400,000. I am with him in all his statements. I think the majority of West Australians were hoodwinked into Federation. Promises were made that we were to be connected by rail with the other States, and a lot of us at that time who were practically new from the other States thought it would be a grand thing to be connected with the Eastern States by rail. I know that particular promise weighed considerably with myself, and I know that it weighed with others. I voted for Federation and worked pretty hard for Federation. I regret that the promises made by the Eastern statesmen have not been kept, and if there is any movement for again separating from that portion of Australia, I shall be one of those for assisting Sir Edward Wittenoom. In a new country like this we should have control of our finances so as to build up our industries: but by the Federal Act we are debarred from assisting our in-

dustries; that is a considerable disadvantage in a new country. I have little farther to say regarding the Speech. I think with some of the previous speakers that if we could possibly do anything to put newcomers on the land we should be following a good policy for populating the country, and there is no doubt this country wants population, and we have any amount of land to settle people on. Any good land policy that comes before the House will have my hearty support.

At 6:30, the PRESIDENT left the Chair.
At 7:30, Chair resumed.

HON. J. A. THOMSON (Central): I think I have made mention on former occasions that these speeches on the Address-in-Reply are, to my way of thinking, mere matters of form which might perhaps serve a good purpose to members who are thinking of going before their constituents in the near future, or who consider this a good way of letting their constituents know that they are alive to local interests. [HON. C. SOMMERS: When are you going up again?] I hardly know when I am going up again. We may perhaps have a general election before long, if we are going to alter the constitution of this House. In addition to that, I think that members, in speaking on this Address-in-Reply, should consider whether they approve of the measures which are forecast in the Governor's Speech, and if they do not approve of them, they should just state how and why they do not approve. If they think they could have put better words into the mouths of the responsible Ministers of the Governor, they ought to say, shortly, clearly and to the point, what they think Ministers ought to have said, or what they would have said if they had been in the Ministers' places. I do not mean to say for one moment that any remarks that may fall from me will influence the Government in the very least. Therefore, I would only be wasting your time and the time of the House in speaking at any length on this Address-in-Reply. There are many remarks in this Speech from His Excellency which, I take it, really represent the opinions of His Excellency's responsible Ministers. There are many

of those remarks of which I heartily approve, and which I will support to the best of my ability, if the measures pass the other House and come before this Chamber for consideration; but in my opinion it will be ample time for me and other members to say what we have to say on these measures if they pass the other House, and we should not waste time by talking about what we will do or should do, or what we think we ought to do, before they come here. True, if I could influence the Ministers in any way in altering their decision or getting them to think differently from what they have thought fit to express by these words put into the mouth of His Excellency, it would be worth my while to speak; but I do not believe for one moment that any words that might fall from my mouth, no matter how earnestly they might be expressed, no matter how fitly put, would make the slightest difference. Therefore, I will just conclude by saying I will wait until these measures which are forecast in this Speech of His Excellency come before the House. As to those I approve of, I will do my level best to get other members who think as I do to support them when they come along; and as to those measures of which I do not approve, I will do my level best to get my fellow members who think as I do to throw them out.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD (Metropolitan-Suburban): My first duty to-night is to join with other members in congratulating you, Mr. President, on the high office to which they have elected you, and I may express the hope that you will live for a very long time to dignify that office; also to congratulate the new Ministers, Mr. Connolly and Mr. Piesse, upon the distinction to which they have risen, although it is not without a pang of regret that I feel the loss of Mr. Kingsmill from the front bench of this Chamber, and I think Mr. Connolly will have a hard matter to excel Mr. Kingsmill in the leadership of this House. In reading down the Speech, it is difficult to say what has been omitted from it that could possibly have been put in. Everything on railways, light lines, Loan Bills and amendments of the Constitution has been inserted, I may say, in an indiscriminate manner. No one seems to know exactly the relative

importance which attaches to the items mentioned in the Governor's Speech. Everything is spoken of in general terms and left very largely to the imagination of members as to what the details are. I think we have a right to be supplied with something more definite than we have before us in the Speech from His Excellency. I have endeavoured to construct a comparative table of the importance of the items in this Speech, and the only thing that has given me a lead at all consists of a few sentences such as this:—

The large expenditure which has been necessary in the past for the administration of the Public Service has, in view of the state of the finances, given my advisers grave cause for consideration.

The reference to the Public Service Commissioner's first proposal as to the classification of the clerical division of the civil service is not quite so emphatic, but the subject demands and should receive careful consideration. The pride of place has been given to the freezing works in the Far North, which we are told by the Speech will receive special consideration. That is the only method I have of arriving at the relative positions of importance in which the Government hold these measures. Our mineral resources and our mineral development must take the first place, I think, in our consideration. They made the State what it is; and to develop new fields and encourage the race of prospectors, which I am informed is in very great danger of dying out, ought to be the aim, and I think is the aim, of the Government. What we want to avoid in connection with our mining development is constantly changing law, so that those who have invested their money here will know just what the law is on the question. The uncertainty that is caused by constant change of law both to workmen and to employers causes a great disturbance, and it must, in our mineral development. The light lines which are promised are not specified here. I do not know how the Government are going to arrive as to which lines are to be built first. Mr. Connor, in moving the Address-in-Reply, mentioned I think about six or eight lines that he wanted constructed in the North-West. I do not know whether the Great Southern

line and the Great Southern districts have all the railways that they need at present. Probably the South-Western district will want several. The Government give us no information as to how they are going to decide, or whether they are going to build them all. I hope we shall have the information ready very much sooner than we had on the last occasion, when I think it was in the last hour of the session the railways were brought down to us. Now we are beginning our session very much earlier than in any previous year, and I think it only fair to this Chamber that this information should be supplied to us at the earliest opportunity. I think Parliament was justified in passing the three railways at the end of last session. We have had all the experience, and we know how much the lines will probably cost. A great deal of discussion which would have delayed us is at the present time over, and the information which has been gained by the calling for tenders and by the early construction of those lines ought to assist the Government and Parliament in dealing with the light lines which will come before Parliament this session. A very serious question is that of Federation and its effect on our revenue. We cannot follow the advice of Mr. Connor, and if necessary use force; because we must remember that the military are in the hands of the Federal authorities. Even the cadets are under Federal control, so that we cannot look in that direction for any great help. But the Government tell us that they are "jealously guarding the rights of the State in this respect." We should like to know what steps they are taking to guard jealously the rights of the State. Merely putting the statement in the Speech does not necessarily mean taking steps. Have Ministers put their views before the Federal Government, the Prime Minister, or the Federal Parliament? I suppose that the Federal representatives of Western Australia are fully seized of the importance of this matter; but we should like to hear from the Colonial Secretary how in this respect our Ministers are jealously guarding the rights of the State. Ministers intend to effect economies wherever possible; and a few weeks ago it was stated—I think by the Premier—that one of the econo-

mies intended was a reduction of Ministerial salaries. I have heard nothing more about it, and I do not know whether it is to be the only economy effected. But I fancy this is only playing with the question. Such an economy is not worth effecting. It is not worth while to make with that object an amendment of the Constitution Act. I do not know whether that is the only object of the proposed amendment; but if so, the amendment is not worth making. Rather do I think that Ministers, if they feel—I hardly know whether I should put it in this light—that their services are not so valuable as those of previous Ministers, should refund the £200 each without altering the Constitution, so that any future Ministers who may estimate their services more highly than the services of present Ministers are estimated by themselves will not need to make another amendment of the Constitution. Whether the proposal was originally made with the intention of following it by farther economies, I do not know; but we have heard nothing more about the reduction of these salaries. I do not propose to say anything now on the question of public service classification. I think we ought to wait until we get the next report of the Public Service Commissioner, which I presume will shortly be to hand. Then we can discuss the question. But I think we must all recognise the diligence and intelligence which the Public Service Commissioner has exhibited, whether or not we agree with his classification. As to a tax on unimproved land values, I think we ought to have clearly set before us the reason why this tax is to be imposed; whether it is, as has sometimes been stated, to burst up the big estates—[MEMBER: Where are they?—well, I am not now discussing where they are; but the question is whether taxation is a proper method of effecting that object. I am not at all convinced that it is. I think that taxation should be solely for the purpose of raising revenue; and if after effecting all proper economies Ministers find that they must introduce a land tax—and I think this is about the only State in the Commonwealth that has not a land tax at the present time. [HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: We have a land tax.] Yes; but a tax imposed by the roads boards—

not by the Government of the State. A land tax is not a new thing on this continent. It has been said that the greater share of this tax must be borne by the population of the towns; and possibly that may be true. It may be that the people of the towns are best able to bear this taxation, which should, I think, fall on those best able to bear it. The Municipalities Bill I do not anticipate seeing this session. The Attorney General, who has it in charge, has promised the municipalities that after the second reading they will have an opportunity of seeing the Bill; and the Municipal Conference, which does not meet until October, in the Show week, intend to discuss the measure, so that we may have the benefit of their investigations.

HON. M. L. MOSS: If the Bill is delayed until October, there will be little opportunity of getting it on the statute-book.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD: Exactly; that is my contention. I think that if it be delayed until October, next session will arrive before we pass the Municipalities Amendment Act.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the Conference are not prepared to discuss it until October, they will not be asked to discuss it.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD: Near the end of the Speech we have one of its most important items: "Bills will also be submitted to you for amending the Constitution." We are told that it is necessary to amend the Constitution Act in regard to the Ministerial salaries; but how are we to know that this is the only amendment proposed? Ministers do not state here what amendment they intend. They may have designs for the abolition of this Council. But I presume the statement means an alteration of the franchise for this Chamber. [HON. J. A. THOMSON Undoubtedly.] Mr. Thomson evidently knows. I cannot quite agree with Mr. Randell's statement that this question was unnecessarily introduced at the elections which took place a little while ago. We must remember that the reduction of the Council franchise was one of the chief planks of the recent Government when they secured such an overwhelming majority in the Lower House electorates; and I believe, from this brief reference in the Speech, that

the successors of the Rason Government entertain the same ideas and the same proposals. Now with Mr. Randell, I do not wish to do anything to weaken this Council in the estimation of the people of the State; but I do not think that a reduction of the franchise will have that effect. In my opinion it will strengthen this Chamber in the affections of the people. The desire for the abolition of this House is at the present time practically non-existent. We hear very little about it. But the desire for an increase in the number of electors for this Chamber is very great. [HON. R. LAURIE: Whence does it come?] It comes from those who wish to have a vote and a voice at the election of members of the Legislative Council. Members know that there is a difference of I think from 80,000 to 100,000 in the number of electors for the respective Houses. That difference is in itself to be seriously regarded; and wherever I went in my election campaign and advocated the strengthening of this Chamber by the reduction of the franchise, my utterances were greeted with loud applause. I know that members will say the reverse—that when other candidates proposed that this Chamber should stick to its present franchise, such statements also were cheered; so perhaps we do not get much guidance in that matter from the people, save the guidance derivable from the last Legislative Council elections. For the life of me I cannot understand why a man who pays £24 10s. per annum is in a different category from the man who pays £25, and why the former should not have a vote. Of course there is a difference of 10s. a year; but that is not such a vast difference as to entitle the latter to a vote and to disentitle the former.

HON. G. RANDELL: Carry your principle to its logical conclusion, and why should not the man who pays £1 a year have a vote?

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD: Well, the hon. member can carry it to that extent if he likes; and if he favours that course he will have an opportunity of putting his views before us. I think we should as far as possible give a vote for this Chamber to every man who has a permanent interest in the State; and by doing that I believe we should strengthen

this House in the affections of the people. In conclusion, we have every reason to enter with great confidence on this parliamentary session. We have here a great State which needs population. A country that is territorially great does not necessarily contain a great people, but it furnishes its people with the opportunity of becoming great; and I hope that, led by the present Government, and with the assistance of Parliament, this State will yet become one of the brightest in the Commonwealth of Australia.

On motion by HON. C. E. DEMPSTER, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House adjourned at 8 o'clock until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 26th June, 1906.

Obituary: Mr. A. J. Diamond, motion of sympathy 46

THE SPEAKER (Hon. T. F. Quinlan) took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the SPEAKER: Annual Report of the Auditor General.

OBITUARY—MR. A. J. DIAMOND.

THE PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): I beg to move that the House at its rising do adjourn until 4:30 o'clock to-morrow. Question passed.

MOTION OF SYMPATHY.

THE PREMIER: It was my melancholy duty at the previous sitting of the House to move a motion expressive of

the sympathy of this House with the people of New Zealand, at the death of the most prominent member of the Legislative Assembly of that Colony. To-day I have to announce that the same grim visitor has entered our own circle, and one who was intimately associated with the parliamentary life of this State has passed away. The late Mr. Diamond, who was a citizen of Western Australia for over 22 years, had served his adopted State in the capacity of a representative in this House for South Fremantle, and while giving every attention to the wants of his own constituency, had not failed to give the benefit of his wide experience to the House when questions affecting the commercial and shipping interests of the State were under review. Generous to a degree, a man whose fair-mindedness commended itself to all, he will indeed be sadly missed. Out of respect to the memory of our friend and fellow-member, I beg to move the adjournment of the House; at the same time extending to Mrs. Diamond and family our sincere sympathy in the hour of their trial.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I desire to second the motion which has been moved by the Premier, and at the same time to express my regret that one who was with us last session apparently in the best of health has since been taken away from us. Since I have been a member of the House I was brought into contact with the late hon. member for South Fremantle, and I say I always found him to be a man of genial disposition, one who was friendly to the whole of the members of the House, no matter on which side they sat, and one who was particularly attentive to his legislative duties. It is regrettable that excitement which was incidental to a subject in which he took a great deal of interest occasioned his end. On behalf of members on this side of the House I desire to join with the Premier in expressing regret that he has been taken away from us, and also to convey our expressions of the deepest sympathy with his relatives. I beg to second the motion.

Question passed, the members standing.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 4:35 o'clock, until the next day.