

the hon. members sentiments are expressed. There is not too much sympathy between ourselves and the hon. member's ideas. He has too many bogeys. He sees things, too often. I have much pleasure in moving this amendment, and I hope it will lead on the part of this House to a clear exposition, perhaps on the part of the Opposition, certainly on the part of members, of their beliefs in the present policy of the Government. I thank the House for its patient hearing.

MR. A. J. WILSON: I second the amendment.

On motion by the MINISTER FOR LANDS, debate adjourned.

REGULATIONS UNDER WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT, TO DISALLOW.

Message with Resolution received from the Legislative Council, affirming that the amended Regulations under the Workers' Compensation Act be disallowed, and requesting the Assembly's concurrence therein.

On motion by MR. RASON, resolved that the consideration of the message be made an order for the 2nd August.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at seven minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 20th July, 1905.

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THE ACTING PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

FIFTH DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): In resuming the debate, I have first to con-

gratulate the Acting President, as other members have done, in being elected to preside during the absence of the President; and we are all confident that you, sir, will perform the duties satisfactorily to this House. We all hope that the President may have a safe and prosperous return to this State, fully restored to health. Looking at the paragraphs in the Speech of His Excellency setting forth the policy of the Government for the current year, and reading it carefully, I think it is the most unsatisfactory address of the kind ever laid before Parliament. We are told that the mining, agricultural, and pastoral industries are flourishing; and while these congratulations are justified, I do not know that any of the benefits to these industries is to be credited to the present Government. The progress of the mining industry is referred to, and this reminds us that very few discoveries have been made of late; indeed it seems extraordinary that all the good things existing on those goldfields should have been discovered during the first few years of settlement. The present position shows that the prospector ought to receive more consideration than he has got in the past. I am convinced that every assistance should be given to encourage farther researches in auriferous country, and that any money expended in assisting prospectors to make farther mining developments will be for the benefit of the State as well as for those who undertake the arduous work of prospecting in the back country. We know that it is practically impossible at the present time for a prospector who discovers a good show to turn it to account, without some assistance in the way of capital; and the fewness of the discoveries which have been made in recent years may be attributed, in a great measure, to the want of sufficient means on the part of prospectors for developing properties when they discover something good. It would be wise on the part of the Government to assist prospectors as far as possible. Referring to agriculture, this industry is one of the most important in the State, and its recent development has been sufficiently great to satisfy anybody. The records of the Survey Department show the great amount of land which has been taken up and is being cultivated by

selectors. Even lands in some districts that were looked upon as almost arid or worthless are now being taken up and cultivated with great satisfaction. With respect to the pastoral industry, which is referred to in His Excellency's Speech, this is a great and important industry which deserves more consideration than it has lately received. It is true that efforts have been made to provide water along the stock routes; but beyond that, very little has been done to assist the pastoralists who are doing pioneering work that is of great value to the State. Among those who are advocating the settlement of the land, there are many who would open the pastoral areas for closer settlement, particularly in grazing leases. To my mind it is unreasonable to allow selectors to go into pastoral leaseholds and take as much as 5,000 acres out of one of those leases. It seems to me bad policy on the part of the Government, because anyone who has knowledge of pastoral leases must know that when the eyes are picked out of a piece of country, it becomes comparatively valueless to the lessee, who is then likely to throw it up. Therefore I think it is unwise to interfere with the pastoralists as some persons are endeavouring to do. There is a long paragraph in the Speech relating to the visit of the Prime Minister and members of the Federal Parliament. The Prime Minister had been here before, and during that visit he was able to ascertain the capabilities and the condition of this State, so as to form a good opinion as to our position. I do not think the money expended by the Government on the visit of Federal members was really necessary, nor will it be of benefit to the country; because the visiting members who came here at the invitation of the Government probably had their minds made up before they came, and I do not think the result will affect the Transcontinental Railway question in any material degree. The financial position and the deficit for the past year are referred to in the Speech. It seems to me there should be no real necessity for a deficit, when we know the enormous revenue received by this State; and yet at the end of the first financial year under the present Government we have an actual deficit of £46,000, and their management of the finances shows a total deficit of

over £126,000 in one year. I do not know what amount of money may have been expended in public works that were not completed; but it seems to me there has not been nearly as much done in public works under the present Government as was done in the previous year. There were works then of very great importance which had to be completed, and I cannot see that any works of great magnitude have been undertaken during the year just closed; and it seems to me that a large sum of money has been frittered away without any benefit to the country. The present Premier promised economical administration, and from his first address to his constituents I thought economy was going to be carried out. Economy is undoubtedly necessary in this State; and I think the Government should do as any private person would do who had to carry on a business; for when he found that his expenditure was greater than his return he would be obliged to reduce that expenditure. We know that offices are created sometimes for only temporary benefit, and of course it is a painful duty to have to discharge officers employed on some temporary work. Public departments should be worked in such a way that no injustice will be perpetrated, by first engaging men and then discharging them. I cannot help thinking that the cost of the Civil Service Commission and several other Royal Commissions has not been justified by the results. Royal Commissions are a very large item in the expenditure, and I do not think the benefit derived from them is at all commensurate with their cost. It is impossible for me, at all events, to wade through the whole of their reports; and I much doubt whether that is possible for any other member. There is an immense volume of information unnecessarily compiled by the commissions, and an immense amount of printing, which I am sure is equally unnecessary. Yesterday we passed a Supply Bill, of which Schedule A divides the expenditure into salaries, miscellaneous, and contingencies. It seems to me this is a very loose method of doing business. If an employer of labour were supplied by his foreman with an estimate for work with the expenditure divided into wages and "miscellaneous," he would, I think, demand an explana-

tion of the latter item. This grouping of items leaves a wide margin for expenditure which may not be approved by Parliament. We are all indebted to Mr. Moss for the very able and outspoken address which he delivered last night. There are few men who have been so consistently independent as he, and for that independence the thanks of this House are due to him. The proposed purchase of the Midland Railway is a matter for serious consideration. Few men in this country who have its interests at heart would not like to see the concession taken over by the Government; but I agree with the members who have already spoken that one and a-half millions is more than the country can, in existing circumstances, give for the property. We know that the best of the land has been already selected; for those who selected it were men of considerable sense and judgment, and it is not at all probable that they selected the worst parts of the country. From my own knowledge of the land, I say the best of it has already been disposed of; and it is for us to consider the value of the remaining portion and the value of the railway. The railway has been worked for a considerable time; and I am informed that to put it in order would cost almost as much as the laying of a fresh railway. The cost of building a new railway of the same length would not amount to more than £600,000; and it would pay the country better to build an altogether new railway than to buy this one, for very good country would be opened up by a new line. [HON. J. W. HACKETT: On what route?] Say north through Goomalling. In that direction there is a considerable area of good agricultural land. [HON. J. W. HACKETT: Whence would you take it from Goomalling?] I should practically skirt the Midland concession. Be that as it may, it is desirable for the Government to purchase such of the Midland Company's land as is suitable for cultivation and has a certain rainfall; and if it can be procured for a reasonable price, I shall be glad to agree to the purchase. Now I come to the proposal for the abolition of this Chamber, a proposal which I do not think is favoured by the people in any part of the State. Who desires it? The proposal simply emanates

from the Labour benches in another place. And why? Because they want to get their own way. They think the Upper House will always obstruct any measure sent up from another place, whether the measure be desirable or undesirable. The fact that this is the source of the Labour party's desire to abolish the Council ought to convince the people that this House is absolutely necessary, and that the country would suffer by its removal. With respect to the Land Acts, I shall not support any amendment, for I think the law is at present sufficiently liberal. The question of old age pensions is of vital importance throughout Australia, because they will necessitate an enormous annual expenditure which I do not think desirable. Though there may be many cases of destitution which are entitled to Government assistance, I think generally that old age pensions would establish a very bad precedent. I think that youth ought to provide for old age. If we encourage men in the belief that the State will provide for them when they attain a certain age, they will not make any effort to secure a competence. I do not think we should encourage that idea, or that the people should be taxed for such a purpose. With respect to the aborigines question, I have had considerable experience of the natives, and I know there are good natives and very bad natives. I think that reports of injustice to the natives have in many cases been awfully exaggerated, and that the natives have received as much kindness and consideration in Western Australia as they could have received in any other community. It is in the interest of the station-owner who wishes to make the natives useful to him to treat them kindly and well; for if they are not so treated they will soon clear out to the bush. Where the natives find themselves well treated they will live on the station, and many of them will make themselves useful. To single out a few instances of barbarity and cruelty is unfair to the country. In any large town in the world we can find brutal offences of daily occurrence. Why do not complainants look at home rather than at Western Australia? How can we, when we cannot prevent cruelty in the midst of civilised populations, expect the remote parts of this State to be entirely

exempt from abuses? It is not reasonable to be expected to legislate for extreme cases. I have always understood that we should not attempt to legislate for exceptions. I think the Aborigines Department has been very well managed, and that the inspector is a kind-hearted and humane man who has endeavoured to do his duty towards the natives. He treats them with every kindness; and I know he has made an earnest and sincere endeavour to improve their condition. Complaints have been made as to the chaining of the native prisoners and witnesses, when being brought to town to be examined. It is impossible to secure the natives in any other way than by chaining them. If they are not chained, they will escape. The same argument may be applied to the allegations of ill-treatment of natives by pearl-fishers and others. These men could not have any control over the natives unless the natives stayed of their own accord with them. If badly treated, the natives would soon "make tracks." With respect to the liquor traffic and the Government taking over all hotels, I think this is a wrong idea. Like every other person, I would like to see less drinking and better order kept in respect to the liquor traffic, but it is impossible to do away with the consumption of liquor. The only thing the Government can do is to see that good spirits are kept at hotels, and that the licensed houses are conducted in a proper manner. More than that, I do not think it is desirable to attempt. For the State to run hotels is not reasonable, and not at all likely to succeed. The Government have quite as much in hand as they can take on at the present moment, perhaps more. The Government cannot carry out efficiently, and in the interests of the country, a scheme of this sort. I was hoping that the mining regulations had been so far rectified and had proved to give satisfaction, that it would be unnecessary to make amendments, but it seems there must be a continual source of tinkering with all legislation. In many instances, instead of making the legislation better it is made worse. The Speech says that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act requires amendment in the direction of empowering the court to grant the same preference to the workers as is already extended to the employers. I am very

sorry to know that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act is not working in the way that those who brought it forward hoped it would work. The working of the Act has been most unsatisfactory, and I do not hesitate to say it would be better for the country if the Act were wiped out altogether—repealed. It does no good; it does not stop strikes. I do not think it is right to exclude all but unionists from work. I think unionism is the source of a great deal of evil in this country. We want a good feeling to exist between the employee and the employer, and unionists only stir up strife. I, as an employer, like my men to love me and to do all they can for me, and I, on my part, will do all I can to advance their interests, and give the wages that the work they are doing for me is worth. But that feeling is gradually becoming extinguished. The only object a man seems to have is to extort the highest wage he can from his employer, and to do as little as he can for that wage. I think that if all unions were done away with, and we tried to establish one united body to work in a just manner, and run one with another, it would be better for the employer and the employee. With respect to the railways foreshadowed in the Speech, I would like to see them constructed, but the Speech does not show how the works are to be carried out. They are desirable works, but I do not think they are reproductive enough to be carried out now, in the present condition of the country. It would be unwise to run into any expenditure which would not be reproductive, and which would not pay a sinking fund and interest on the amount of principal, also repay the full amount within a reasonable time. With Governments, as with all men in business, when they borrow they expect to have to pay the money back again. I do not think the Government ought to put forward a scheme unless they have some means of being able to carry out the works. If they have reasonable means of obtaining money and of repaying it again, I should have pleasure in supporting the lines of railway mentioned, because railways are a means of opening up a country. I sincerely hope, whatever measures are brought forth for our consideration, a staid, reliable Government will be es-

tablished, and by this time next year matters will be in a more satisfactory condition than they are at the present time.

HON. R. LAURIE (West): It was not my intention to have anything to say in regard to the Speech, but I understand some members think I should make some remarks on one item. Before doing so I would just like to make a few passing remarks on the paragraphs of the Speech. With reference to the referendum, it may be interesting to members if I place before them my views. Personally I consider the taking of a referendum a waste of time, and that has been borne out on many occasions. The last occasion on which a referendum was taken, and with which I had some slight connection, was in regard to one of the largest municipalisation schemes in the State, the Fremantle Tramway and Electric Lighting scheme. The money to be borrowed for that scheme totalled about £86,000. The total number of votes cast for the municipalisation of the scheme was 797 out of the whole of the voters on the role in Fremantle. When it came to a question of financing the scheme and receiving the money for carrying out the work—the sum required was £85,714—the total votes cast for and against the raising of the money was 662. That is undoubtedly the largest scheme of municipalisation in the State, and when we consider there are some 20,000 people in Fremantle, and only 662 voted for the raising of the money and 797 for the adoption of the scheme, it seems to me that a referendum is a farce. The only way to deal with the Upper House is in a constitutional manner. In connection with old age pensions, as one who spent a good deal of time in his early days in the old country I cannot but express regret when I hear members say that youth should look after old age. The best way to look after old age is to tax the youth by an old age pension scheme. An old age pension scheme is a better provision than the workhouse.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It does not do away with the workhouse.

HON. R. LAURIE: It will do away almost entirely with the workhouse.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: You are quite mistaken.

HON. R. LAURIE: It has been said by Mr. Richard Seddon, the Premier of New Zealand, that New Zealand seemed to have been blessed from the day the old age pension scheme was introduced; and I say that even if such a scheme does away in a small way with the workhouse system, it will be a blessing for Western Australia and the Commonwealth as a whole. The hon. member (Dr. Hackett) says it has not done away with the workhouse in Victoria or in New South Wales, but I say there are many cases in which a pension of only 5s. or 10s. a week may be the means of keeping together a husband and wife who have travelled together for a matter of 50 years, instead of separating them.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The rule has been, they don't want to stay together. That is the evidence of the Commission.

HON. R. LAURIE: I hope my friend, embarking as he is on his new life, will not find that to be the case. But although all are not constituted alike, there are times when it is desirable that two persons should journey on different roads, and I think as a rule both wish to journey on the same road, and have that happiness which I am sure my friend is looking forward to and which I hope he will receive. The paragraphs throughout the Speech are very vague, about as vague as the possibility of the House having to deal with the questions later on. There is one paragraph in regard to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act which says:—

The Conciliation and Arbitration Act requires amendment in the direction of empowering the Court to grant the same preference to the workers as is already extended to the employers under the existing measure, and likewise for the purpose of rendering the legislation for the amicable adjustment of industrial disputes more effective generally than it is at present.

I know of no preference extended to the employer that the worker has not. I trust, whatever this Government or any Government may do, they will not do anything that will injure or have for its object the bringing about of a state of affairs which will do away with the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. There is no more strong advocate for arbitration than I am. One has only to go through one or two big strikes to become aware of that fact. It is not the loud-

voiced man or the man who attends the meetings, but it is the married man with the family who suffers from a strike. If we keep the Conciliation and Arbitration Act and both sides will bow down to the award, then everything will be all right. There is one point in the Speech in connection with the railway from Port Hedland to Nullagine I should like to touch on. I have pointed out many times the necessity for such a railway, and I welcome the announcement that the Government propose to construct a railway between these two points. I am satisfied from what I have heard from people coming from Port Hedland and that country that the railway is much required. One has only to take the amount of cargo that is taken from Port Hedland to Singapore, and shipped home, to know that by constructing a railway there we shall be opening up one of the most valuable ports of the State. I come to the question which perhaps I know more about than anything else referred to in the Speech, the question of the dock at Fremantle. In connection with that dock I may say at once, as one of the representatives of the West Province and one who has had experience of docks, that the majority of people at Fremantle will have no floating dock, even if they have to wait until the State can afford a proper graving dock. I may say with all due respect to the present Government in placing this matter before us, it appears to me it is simply something placed in the Speech which the people of Fremantle and the people of the State generally can quarrel over. There have been five or six different Governor's Speeches in which the question of a graving dock has been referred to. That has been promised by each Government as it has come along, but there has been absolutely nothing done. Now we take the question of a floating dock, and I say it will become simply a bone of contention with the people of Fremantle and the people of the State. Personally, I consider that a floating dock should not be entertained for one moment, in face of the promises made to the people of Fremantle, and in face of the promise made when this great harbour was built we should not have a proposal brought forward for a floating dock. [THE

COLONIAL SECRETARY: Did you ever

advocate a floating dock?] Never. I know exactly what the hon. member refers to, and I will save him the trouble of asking questions by making the position clear. Some nine or ten years ago when shipping was fairly brisk at Fremantle I had put under offer to me a floating dock from Sydney. I made an offer of it, like any other mercantile man would do, to the Government of this State, and it was not accepted. It was the only proposal I ever made for a floating dock, and a floating dock at that time would have cost only a very small sum of money. It was not such a proposal as we have now, a proposal to build a floating dock which, according to the Premier's speech or some of the other speeches, would cost £150,000. I contend, and I contend with some knowledge, that any scheme for a dock in Fremantle should only be taken into consideration with a scheme for the extension of the harbour for Fremantle. It may surprise members when I tell them that in two years the increase of the registered tonnage for the port of Fremantle runs into nearly 200,000 tons, and to-day the tonnage in Fremantle for twelve months is greater than that at Port Wellington, New Zealand. When they were considering the building of a graving dock there, they wisely selected business men, who had first to float the loan and then to find the interest. They, as good men, decided they would have no floating dock, but previously to deciding they sent their engineer round the world. That engineer went to nearly every port of importance both in America, Great Britain, and on the Continent, and after most extensively going into the matter he came back and recommended that a floating dock was not what was required, but that a graving dock was the only proper class of dock to put in the harbour of Wellington, where it had to earn sufficient money to pay interest on the cost. The statements as to the cost of a floating dock are very misleading indeed. Members will be told that a floating dock will cost £100,000, and they will be further told that a floating dock will cost perhaps £10,000 for dredging the harbour. The harbour at Fremantle, extending from the breakwater to the bridge, on many occasions during the last year was taxed to the utmost. There are

times when the harbour is practically empty, but we know that if we want to keep the good name of any harbour we must be prepared to put a ship alongside at any time. Furthermore, for foot frontage per wharf the Fremantle harbour is doing more business than any other harbour in Australasia, in fact any harbour that I know of; it is finding more accommodation than any harbour I know of per foot frontage. Therefore I say the dock and the extension should be taken into consideration in one scheme. Some people tell us, and no doubt the wish may be father to the thought, that ships will go to Perth. I as one who has lived in Fremantle for some years would just like in that connection to put my views in as few words as possible before this House, so that it may be guided. In that connection I would ask members to think for a moment in what part of Perth they could put the shipping to be a benefit either to the people of Perth or to the people beyond Perth, who are the people that primarily pay the dues, the tonnage dues, that is to say the wharfage on goods going into this State. Could they put it from Mill Point up to the bridge? Could we shut off at the present time what the Government is doing, making an esplanade from one end to the other? If we put the ships there, how are we going to deal with the ships when they get there? How are we going to get railway communication with them? It is not impossible; but the cost to this young country would be so great and the benefits so few that it would be throwing away money, absolutely shoving it into the sea. If we took them to South Perth the people of Perth would not benefit. If we put them near the Canning Bridge, are the people of the goldfields or of Perth going to benefit by it? I may call your attention to the report of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, from which you may find that nearly 300,000 tons could have been sent from the wharves at Fremantle direct to the consumer, whether it be at Menzies, Kalgoorlie, or any part of the State. It is a mistaken idea that ships one day will go to Perth. I say it would be a bad day for the State of Western Australia if any farther money were expended in carrying the ships farther up the river when sufficient accommodation can be found

on the water-way. It is well known that the late Government bought quite a quantity of land for harbour extension on the south side of the river, and they have a scheme, or had a scheme, for carrying the railway bridges across Rocky Bay, and also for a dock. It is also a very well known fact that their engineers are not agreed upon whether there should be a floating dock or a graving dock. Engineers would place a graving dock, if required, or they would place a floating dock; they would do anything for us. But let the Government ask an engineer straight out what in his opinion is the best for Fremantle or the State generally. Under the present constitution of the Harbour Trust, if a dock be placed there the State will have to be responsible for any shortage. The Fremantle Trust, as at present constituted, simply pays in the revenue after paying all maintenance. It pays it in to the consolidated fund and can do nothing farther. The Trust does not know to the present day the capital cost of the harbour; that has never been given to it. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: Not yet.] I would like to say the hon. member had the opportunity for nearly two years to provide that capital cost. That is the difference between the constitution of the Fremantle Harbour Trust and that of the Wellington Harbour Trust and other harbour trusts throughout Australia. When Wellington proposed to build a floating dock the Harbour Trust at once said, "We shall have to get a harbour improvement rate. Out of our revenue as we already have it we shall be unable to provide interest for it and we shall have to strike a harbour rate." The harbour rate might be a very small one and such a rate that it would be scarcely felt, but still the accommodation would be there for any ship that might require it. The present Harbour Trust has no power to strike a rate. It may strike a rate if the Government ask it to do so, but until authority is given it, the Trust would be acting in an invalid manner in so doing. No floating dock will be acceptable to the people of Fremantle or the people of this State, but the graving dock should be part of one scheme, the harbour extension, and I am satisfied that Fremantle and the shipping community will be pleased to wait until a Government is in power which will bring about that graving

dock which has been promised from year to year. I have said quite enough on the subject. I know that much has been said to commend a floating dock to the present Government from the fact that it could be put together at Fremantle, that it could be riveted, made in sections, and the plates sent out, and employment be found. But how much more employment would be found by means of a graving dock? The whole of the cost would be for employment with the exception of the cost of the concrete. The very able engineer of the Wellington Harbour Trust said this, and it is well for the Government to bear it in mind, that to put a floating dock together in this State we should require a shipyard, because the sections of that dock would be of 500 to 600 tons capacity. Therefore in any scheme in connection with a floating dock we have to consider that we should want the accommodation to put it together, that is a shipyard. Mr. Fergus goes farther and says he is informed by the authorities here that the harbour would have to be dredged to a particular depth. It would be completed to a depth of 45 feet. We know what the bottom of the harbour at Fremantle is, and could the work be carried out for the paltry sum of £10,000? I say it could not. It does not finish at the £10,000. Mr. Fergus says the dock would cost £150,000, and that to build walls and workshops, put up piers, and meet all the other incidentals of a floating dock such as that at Wellington, the extra cost would be £90,000. No doubt Mr. Fergus was very careful in taking the figures out. He therefore recommended, and strongly recommended, that no floating dock should be put there, but that a graving dock should be built, and one that would last for all time. I am satisfied that whatever Government may be in power when it goes into this question it should first of all redeem the promises made year after year to the people of Fremantle and the people of the State that a graving dock should be put there, and that after it has carried out the promises made by Government after Government it will go into the question of cost. I am satisfied that the Government would come to the conclusion that with the very heavy charges in connection with a floating dock—a steel

vessel which through the heat and moisture going on inside would rapidly decay unless continually painted and cleaned—such dock would, unless we had a great quantity of shipping to keep it going and make it pay, become a burden. I hope that whatever Government deals with it will carry out the promises and make the closest inquiries into what the cost of maintenance is going to be, and give the people such a dock that it will take any warship or mailboat likely to come.

HON. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan-Suburban): I should like first of all to offer my congratulations to you, Mr. Acting President, for having been elected to the Presidential Chair for the time being, and to offer my congratulations also to members on their choice. I have been somewhat surprised to hear some of the animadversions passed on the Governor's Speech by members. Looking at it as a work of art, there is a delicacy about it that must commend itself to persons with artistic tastes. For many years now there have been two schools of art; the one which pays an immense amount of attention to detail and less to general effect, and the other, which I understand is known as the impressionist school, paying no attention to detail whatever but a great deal to general effect. As the impressionist school is the later of the two, the Government are undoubtedly modern in their ideas of art and drawing, at all events drawing Governor's Speeches. The Governor's Speech is like hope, it is flattering; but I may be pardoned for saying that there is scarcely enough detail as to how the various promises and flattering proposals in the Speech are to be carried out. If we had been furnished with a little more information as to whether the money was obtainable for carrying out the projects, no doubt many of them very admirable, which the Government have in view, and more information as to the revenue the Government estimate they will receive from some of the taxation propositions, some of them most iniquitous, to which they propose to pledge the country, the Speech would have been a greater success and members would have been more satisfied. I may honestly congratulate the Government, at all events, on their change of tone during the

last year. This is evidenced in at least two ways in the Speech. The Government, if I may use the expression, resemble in many ways the month of March, which is said to come in like a roaring lion. Of course their manner of exit is not yet determined, but their demeanour is becoming more lamb-like ever since they assumed power. The leader of the House may pardon me if I say that he himself is an instance. When he first assumed office he was considered to be with the Government but not of them; he was considered to be, if I may say so, rather a striking instance of moderation in the counsels of the Government; yet the other day I read a speech where he was described as the best democrat of the lot. In this connection I may explain to members that the term "democrat," as used on this occasion, appears to me to mean "very much in favour of the Government of the whole of the people by one section of the people." There are two instances of the moderation of the Government to be seen in this Speech. In the first place, we have the proposal to allow the construction of the Pilbarra Railway by private enterprise. I take that as an extremely graceful and opportune concession to public opinion, and one in which I am prepared to give the Government all the support in my power. Then again, instead of the former proposal of the straight-out abolition of this Chamber, the proposal is now, not that the Government should bring down a Bill to abolish this Chamber, but that they should bring down one for the purpose of asking the "third party" whether they will abolish the Chamber or not. Perhaps this leads on to a subject on which I cannot congratulate the Government so much. It seems to me that they have a tendency in various ways to shift responsibility. It appears that the term "responsible government" is tending to have less and less meaning to this Government during the last few months. We find, when difficult questions arise, either a reference to a Royal Commission, on which subject Mr. Moss said a good deal yesterday, or, as in this proposal, a reference to the people by means of a referendum. Captain Laurie spoke about the futility of referenda and gave instances; but in my opinion the worst feature of referenda is the endeavour to shift the re-

sponsibility, which I maintain rests by right on the shoulders of the Government, on to the shoulders of a lot of people who very likely do not take that interest they should in the subject they are asked to adjudicate on. For that reason, if for no other, when this Bill comes forward, if it does come forward at all, I shall oppose it on the ground that the referendum is an instrument that should not be used in the direction of shifting responsibility from the shoulders of those who should bear it. I am sorry to learn that the Government consider that the deficit during the last year cannot during the coming year be made up by judicious administration and some saving in the expenditure of the various departments. I cannot help thinking this is possible; and I maintain that the imposition of an income tax—that last weapon of taxation, for in history it is always the last weapon of taxation throughout the world—before we want to use it, is a foolish step not only from a financial point of view, but also as regards the effect it must have on the outside public and the rest of the world. When the news goes forth that Western Australia—a country in our state of development, with an abounding revenue of over £14 per head, every man, woman, and child—and when it is brought home to those people upon whom we depend for financial aid, it can have nothing but a bad effect; and I am perfectly certain that an income tax is to be approached with the utmost caution, and should never be used until it is absolutely necessary. I do not think it is necessary at present. There is perhaps some excuse for an unimproved land tax; but in this case I very much doubt whether the result will be equal to the trouble and expense of collection. One tax I can support the Government in, and that is the tax of totalisators. I think it is ample time that such a tax was initiated; and while talking about this matter, I should like to ask the leader of the House if he will tell us whether it is the intention of the Government to take some steps towards the restriction of racing, which I maintain is becoming a curse to the community. We have twice as many race meetings as we should have, and if we lose a little totalisator tax by restricting the number

of meetings, I consider it will be money well lost, because a great deal of misery, privation, and dishonesty is caused by the presence in our midst of too great a proportion of the community devoted to racing. As a result of the airiness, sketchiness, and picturesqueness of the Governor's Speech, although it has proposed at an early date to bring down measures on these various modes of taxation, it has not pleased the Government to state in any way whatever, even approximately, what revenue they estimate will be produced by this taxation. Surely the Government must have information, or surely if they have not the information it was their duty, before making statements that they proposed to introduce this legislation, to find out even approximately what the result would be, so that we would be in a better position to express an opinion on the proposed taxation. Members who have preceded me have stated what is evidently true, that the question of the purchase of the Midland Railway is one to be approached with the utmost caution. I cannot help regretting that the Government, through their representative in this Chamber, have not thought fit to give us at least some information in regard to this proposed purchase. It is put very baldly in the Speech. The price is mentioned, and we are led to believe that, so far as the Government are concerned, they are actually pledged to the purchase at the price mentioned. Presuming that the reports, which are to be laid on the table before we finally consider the matter, bear out to the fullest possible extent the fact that the purchase is a good one, members will have to consider whether, even good though the purchase be, it is advisable. They have to consider whether it is well to increase our indebtedness to the tune of one and a-half millions in this direction, or whether it would be proper to expend some proportion of that sum in works which might possibly do the country a great deal more good. Of course members will realise that I am not now talking as to whether we are going to get good value for the money or not; but I think it is the duty of members to weigh well the question as to whether the spending of that money, even though it appears to be a bargain on the part

of the Government, is judicious at the present juncture, or whether it would not be better to save the money altogether, or, if we must spend it, to lay it out in various other directions, such as the building of spur or loop lines along the Great Southern Railway. [HON. J. W. HACKETT: Why should not the South-Western Railway be considered?] If I had looked at the hon. gentlemen a moment sooner I certainly would have put the South-Western Railway first. In mentioning the Great Southern Railway, I only gave it as an instance. I am sorry that I have hurt the feelings of the member for the South-West Province. It is a question, I maintain, that Parliament will have to take very carefully into consideration, in the first place whether we should spend the money, and secondly whether on the Midland Railway, which is already here, or whether we should spend the money in making agricultural lines in other parts of the State. I was somewhat surprised to hear Captain Laurie speaking on the subject of old age pensions, and saying the system would have the effect of doing away with the workhouse. There is nothing farther from the fact, for this reason, that if the hon. member were to visit such institutions, I might almost say in the world, he would find that a great proportion of the unfortunate people who are in workhouses are not only old but also invalids, and it is impossible for invalids to live on the pittance which might suffice under a system of old age pensions. Reference has been made to the Federal Parliament providing pensions, that is if Parliament agrees that old persons should automatically receive a pension. There is in existence in this State, and presumably in other States, what is practically a system of old age pensions, in that deserving cases are not compelled to go to the institutions provided for housing the indigent poor. It is said that the old age pension system will do away with pauper relief. I recognise that this is the one merit of an old age pension system, that the unfortunate recipients will receive as a right and not as a charity the aid that is given. Owing to the fact that old age pensions would be dispensed automatically, we have to consider whether many cases

which are undeserving would not under that system receive relief which ought not to be given. The system would save the feelings of many worthy persons, but I am afraid it would also be likely to bestow monetary help automatically on many who are unworthy. I am glad to see that the Government propose to reintroduce a Bill dealing with the aborigines, and I would suggest that the Government cannot do better than reintroduce the Bill which was passed by this Chamber last session. The committee which sat on that Bill took a great deal of trouble over it, its members being fairly well acquainted with the native question in all its aspects; and from my knowledge of the State and of aborigines in the State, I feel sure that no Bill more fair to both parties, employers of aborigines and the natives, could be framed than the Bill which we passed last session. I was pleased to hear Captain Laurie's remarks on the question of providing a floating dock, and I was still more pleased to hear the member talk of the uselessness and foolishness of endeavouring to bring, for many years to come, the shipping traffic of this State up the river to Perth. The effect would be that in years to come, instead of this State having one of the most successful ports in Australia, the port of Fremantle, it might become under that system one of the most unsuccessful. Therefore, I hope that any scheme for bringing the shipping up to Perth will be postponed for many years to come. It is intensely disappointing to find that after the lengthy inquiry made by the Royal Commission on Immigration, an inquiry which has cost thousands of pounds, after all the expense and trouble, we have in the Governor's Speech not a word about the vital question of immigration. Furthermore, in the Supply Bill which we passed yesterday, after carefully examining the schedule in that Bill I could not find any sum which could be legitimately supposed to be applicable for expenditure on immigration. We must, in my opinion, have immigration and have it speedily. The rate of increase in our population from outside the State is gradually decreasing, and what increase we do get is drawn not from outside Australia, but from within Australia. We must look on this

matter from a Federal standpoint, and I say it will do Australia little good to shift its population from one State to another. What we want is to draw population from outside Australia. We have unlimited capacity for more population, and it is the duty of any Government in power to initiate and carry out as quickly as possible a reasonable and good system of immigration. Instead of encouraging immigration, the present Government seem inclined to rather rap over the knuckles the Agent General, who has been doing his best to introduce immigrants. That is a pitiable state of affairs. I think the Government are pursuing a mistaken policy in not using every effort to encourage immigration which this State so greatly needs. For the first time that I can remember we have a Governor's Speech without any reference to a question which, in my opinion and in that of several members, has a most important bearing on the progress, prosperity, and daily life of many of our inhabitants, and that is the question of education. There is not one word in the Speech about education, not a word about the intention of the Government in regard to the University which we at all events helped to start in the session before last; not a word about completing that scheme of secondary education which was practically ready when the James Government went out of office. Have the present Government lost interest in that question? Is it that they do not intend to carry out and perfect the educational system of the State which, although very good, is capable of being improved; or is it simply because they have forgotten the subject altogether? In either case it shows a want of interest on the part of the Government in a subject that is of great importance to the State. There is another matter. I am happy to say that when I occupied the position of Colonial Secretary I was instrumental in starting at Claremont a new hospital for the insane. I find now, after inquiry, that the work has been creeping along at a snail's pace. Any member who has taken the trouble to visit the hospital for the insane at Fremantle will agree that this work of providing larger and more suitable accommodation is one of the most necessary that can be carried out, and one that

should be carried out as quickly as funds will allow. It is true, perhaps, that the work has no political significance; but it has a very large bearing on the comfort of those unfortunate creatures who are bereft of reason. And the question has an economical aspect, for events have proved in other lands that for the successful treatment of the insane it is necessary that there should be proper housing accommodation. We have now in charge of the insane in this State a gentleman who is acquainted with the most modern methods, and has been recommended as one possessing remarkable ability in dealing with the insane. Yet his efforts are almost useless from the fact that he has not yet the material to work with. He is expected to make bricks without straw, because he has not the proper facilities for treating the patients in accordance with modern methods. His efforts will be practically wasted until those buildings at Claremont are carried to completion. Some years ago, under peculiar circumstances, the percentage of lunatics in this State was only one-half the normal rate of the world. That was a state of affairs we could not expect to continue, and it has already ceased to exist; for even now, if the present rate of increase is kept up and if the present rate of construction in the new buildings at Claremont is kept up, then by the time the new asylum is finished, it will be as crowded as the Fremantle Asylum was before the new building was started. That will be a pitiful state of affairs. There is another matter which for the last two or three years has been crying aloud for amendment, that is the accommodation for housing our prisoners. The Fremantle Gaol has long become a more or less useless institution, because firstly it is in a situation where no gaol ought to be, that is in a large town, because the facilities for employing prisoners who are not capable of learning a trade are so small. The modern prisoner appears to have more innate wickedness in him than his predecessor of some years ago, and possibly that is because he is better educated. There is a large percentage of men who cannot or will not pay attention to the learning of a trade while in prison, and the problem is, what to do with prisoners of that class. Before many years are passed, it will be neces-

sary that a labour prison be made close to Perth; not in the town itself, because prisoners should not be subjected to the indignity of being marched through the streets on their way to and from work. But that such an institution will have to be started, and started speedily, is indubitable, and I am somewhat disappointed that the present Government have shown no indication of an intention to start it. There is another matter so small that I feel almost ashamed to mention it; but it is a pet scheme of mine, and one which was some time ago well on its way to completion: that is, the establishment of a State sanatorium for phthisical patients. I understand some proposition was made to turn part of the hospital at Coolgardie into such an institution; but that scheme has various disadvantages. Firstly, the site is already occupied by buildings; and secondly, there is not sufficient land to allow of those out-door occupations which are necessary for the treatment of these people. It has been undoubtedly proved in other parts of the world that phthisis—consumption—can be prevented and practically stamped out of a country, if means are taken to eradicate it; yet we find that people go about their daily vocations paying no attention to this, one of the most fell diseases to which humanity is subject, and a disease which is preventable. We allow phthisical patients to go into our general hospitals—places to which their admission should not even be thought of; and instead of endeavouring to curb the disease, people apparently do their best to disseminate it. This may be a small matter, but it is in my opinion most important; and it is one in which, for the past year or two at all events, I have taken considerable interest. I hoped that some steps would be taken in this direction; but apparently nothing has been done. I feel I have spoken at inordinate length; but one other matter I must refer to—the paragraph mentioned by Captain Laurie, in which the Governor's Speech refers to an amendment in the Arbitration Act. I have read that paragraph several times, and the more I read it the more involved and ambiguous it seems to become. The Government approach the subject like Agag, walking delicately. Why all this caution? Who are the birds to be frightened by the

phrase "preference to unionists"? I presume that is what the paragraph means. Even now, the Government do not seem to like to say what it means. The leader of the House (Hon. J. M. Drew), who is now silent, will I hope explain when he rises what is the meaning of the "preference to workers," which so far has not been denied, and to which employers have so long been used. I presume it means preference to unionists; and I hope that to save trouble the Government, when introducing the promised amendment of the Arbitration Act, will do this Chamber the honour of introducing it here. The Bill, I think, will then be very carefully looked after. I have to thank members for listening to me. Of course an amendment to the Address-in-Reply is never moved in the Upper House—[MEMBER: Sometimes]—and I shall not move it now; but it seems so peculiar to bring in a Governor's Speech practically asking this Chamber to assent to its own destruction, either in one way or other, that though I will not move an amendment, the fact that no other member has done so is extraordinary. I beg, with the exceptions I have mentioned—not too numerous, I hope—to tender my support to the Address-in-Reply.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): It is not my intention to detain the House many minutes, as the Speech has been exhaustively considered by members who have preceded me. As to the referendum on the abolition of this Chamber, I am entirely in accord with the opinions so ably expressed by Mr. Moss. I notice a paragraph in the Speech to the effect that, with a view to minimise the evils attending the liquor traffic, a consolidating measure will be brought in embodying the principle of State ownership. Though not myself a teetotaler, I should heartily welcome and support any measure that would minimise drink in this country. I am not prepared to say that I believe in the State ownership of hotels; in fact, the one State hotel we have has been a very disastrous experiment. I can safely say that if a proposal for State ownership comes before this House, I shall be found voting against it; for I do not believe in State ownership of hotels, with the exception, perhaps, of railway refreshment rooms. But in any measure to minimise drink I shall heartily

support the Government. The evils of immoderate drinking were brought forcibly to my mind last year, when I travelled through the United States of America. There one passes from town to town and city to city, and one is struck immediately with the fact that there is not that inducement to drink that is held out to the people of Australia. One does not see at every corner an open hotel door with the word "bar" appearing in large letters on the window. One can go into an hotel in America, and be there for a considerable time without knowing it has a bar. A traveller can get a drink if he wants it; but there is no inducement held out for anyone to drink. I called at St. Louis while the Exhibition was open; and my visit brought forcibly to my mind the fact that we in Australia are too much addicted to drink. At St. Louis one saw day after day vast crowds numbering from 50,000 to 100,000, drawn particularly from the country districts, and consisting largely of young men; and I can assure the House that in the whole of that Exhibition, of which the buildings covered 1,260 acres, there was not a single bar or public-house. A visitor could certainly get a drink in a *café* if he wanted it; but there was no inducement to drink. On the contrary, the American Government does everything possible to stop drink. At every corner of the city is a beautiful fountain of iced water which can generally be had for nothing, or in some cases for one cent. a glass. As I went through, for a week or more, those crowds of people at the Exhibition, I never saw a sign of drink on one of those young men. I am sorry to say things are very different in Australia. I have no objection to drink taken in moderation; but I do say that the manner in which public-houses are conducted here is a disgrace to the Administration. If the Licensing Act were properly administered, I believe the hotels would be quite different. Mr. Haynes put it very well last evening when he said that in the majority of hotels a guest is looked on as an intruder and is not welcome at all unless he drinks. If a man goes there simply for board and lodging, to which he has a right, he is regarded as a nuisance. There is no gainsaying the fact that nine-tenths of the hotels in Perth and throughout the

State are simply drinking saloons. They are not hotels at all, in the true sense of the word. A good meal and a decent room are the last things the management expect you to ask for. If the Act was properly enforced, and less inducement held out for drinking and more attention paid to accommodation, there would be no need for the State ownership of hotels. I wish to refer to a matter not touched by previous speakers. The Speech states that an amendment of the Companies Act will be introduced, for the purpose of enforcing the local registration of companies operating in this State. If a measure was ever wanted, this measure is; and I will go so far as to say that if the present Government, though I differ from them very seriously, introduce a proper amendment to the local Companies Act, and embody therein certain recommendations made in the report of the Royal Commission on the Boulder Perseverance Mine, then they have justified their existence even though they do nothing else. Members will recollect the gigantic swindles—they cannot be otherwise termed—that were perpetrated in this and other mines during last year. The Royal Commission's report, and the evidence, do not make one feel very proud of our mining laws under which such swindles were possible. This Royal Commission resulted from the fact that on the 25th March, 1904, at a general meeting of shareholders, the general manager's report was read, as is usual, and the report stated that the ore reserves amounted to 401,677 tons, containing 500,000 ounces of gold worth two millions sterling. Such was the report made to the shareholders, though there had been for two months previously, reports stating that the mine could not keep up its average. Three months later, Nichols, the general manager, was compelled to sign a fresh report, which stated that the mine had, instead of 400,000 tons of ore reserves, but 139,329 tons for 99,345 ounces, worth less than £400,000, an admitted loss of £1,600,000. What would be said of the manager of any company that made such a statement as that? It was quite clear that statement was only made for one purpose—to unload their shares, for the London directors to take down the ordinary shareholders. There is

something wanting in our laws when a man or a company can swindle shareholders in that fashion and yet go scot-free. What would be said of, say, a shipping company that issued their annual report and said "We have 20 ships," and three months later when an inspection is made it is found they have only four ships, and the shares fall from 20s. to 3s. or 4s? There would be an outcry for a criminal prosecution. In South Africa, during Kruger's time, although Kruger was a much-abused man, perhaps deservedly so, his mining laws were much in advance of our mining laws. He compelled local registration, instead of allowing as we allow companies to do, have directors living 10,000 miles away, being neither use nor ornament to a mine. On the contrary their only use seems to be to sign scrip when a transfer is wanted, or rig a mine and work a swindle. Kruger compelled every mine to have a board of directors not only resident in the State but in the town where the mine was situated; and these directors were responsible for the reports sent out, and were on the spot to advise the management. Not only are London directors useless, but it is an immense cost in many instances to have a London office; and it has kept mines from paying dividends. If you speak to some men, they say that the directors only get £200 a year. I admit that, but I will give an instance. There was the Oroya Brown Hill. The salaries of the directors were £200 or £250 a year, but they got 2s. for every ton of ore taken out of the mine, which brought their emoluments up to about £12,000 a year. So these men in London drew £2,000 a year each. One point I wish to bring before the House is that during the time these swindles were being worked in connection with the Great Boulder Perseverance, the Northern Associated, and the Boulder Deeps, also the Lake View before that time, in every instance these mines were closed to inspection. No legitimate reason can be advanced by anyone why a mine should be closed to inspection. The only reason is that some false reports may be going on saying that there are so many tons of ore in sight, worth so much; as in the case of the Boulder Perseverance, when such was not the case. If a clause is embodied in a

Bill that mines should be open to inspection, it may be said that they are quite willing to admit shareholders, but it is not fair that everybody should be admitted. Let me remind members not to be gulled by such a statement.

HON. Z. LANE: The shareholders always have been admitted.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: That is not sufficient. When you say "shareholders" you mean registered shareholders.

HON. Z. LANE: Certainly.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: I should say in some of the mines 30 per cent. or 50 per cent. or 60 per cent. of the shares are in Western Australia or some part of Australia. We know in the case of the Great Fingal there were over 50 per cent. of the shares held here; because they put their heads together and upset the London board and elected their own men. But probably if you look at the companies' register you find, say, 5 per cent. or 10 per cent. of the shareholders are in Western Australia. Most of the shares are bought under cover, and shareholders are never registered. I myself have had shares for years, fully paid up, yet held by brokers in London, because it is an expensive matter to have them transferred and put on to the local register. Mr. Brimage can bear me out in this, that if one sells shares in London it costs money to send them home again. The recommendation in the report reads in this way:—

That each mine in the State shall be open at reasonable and convenient hours for inspection by any shareholder, on production of his share certificate or a declaration that he has a pecuniary interest in the company.

If that is embodied in the new Companies Act, it will embrace everything. I go farther and say that any person should be admitted to the mine at a reasonable time.

HON. Z. LANE: If he would pay for it. It would cost £100,000 a year.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: The hon. member has stated what he knows to be incorrect when he says it would cost £100,000 a year to show people over a mine. How many men care to go down a mine? Make a small charge if you will to keep the loafer and idler out of the mine. I go farther and say that every man should be able to go down a mine. If you offer shares to a man, has

not that man who is going to buy the shares as much interest in the mine as the seller? In the first place, a company is floated, and the public are invited to come in; and if a man is going to buy shares, has he not as much interest in the mine as the man who is selling? What objection can there be to have that regulation embodied in the Companies Act? That will get over the difficulty. Mr. Sholl says, "Are they any the wiser?" I admit that 19 out of every 20 men would not be any the wiser; but the fear the manager will have is that the twentieth man may turn up and expose any swindle which may be going on; and that fear will keep the manager straight.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: They would have to take samples.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: A man could form a very good idea of whether there was 100,000 tons of ore in sight. But there is a paragraph in the report which meets the objection of Mr. Sholl when he says that people must take samples. The report says:—

That the Minister for Mines shall have power to authorise an officer of the department to take samples from any part of a mining company's property, and generally to inspect any of the workings, records, and books of the company; and also that the Minister shall have power to compel any company to make and keep assay plans as well as plans of the underground workings, showing the real state of the mine and containing all the information respecting the mine workings as supplied to the secretary of the company; and that these shall be open for inspection by any shareholder on production of his share certificate or a declaration that he has a pecuniary interest in the company.

If this and the other recommendation I have mentioned are carried out, it will do a great deal to revive confidence in mining in Western Australia.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It will prevent the industry getting the blame of what others are doing in England.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: It will also be a kindness to the English shareholders, who seem to me to be a helpless lot to allow these things to go on; and it will, what is more to us, save the good name of this State. There is another matter in connection with the local registration of companies. We are paying something like two millions a year in dividends. We ought to do everything we can to keep as much of that money in

this State as possible. At the present time if you are a shareholder, when you get your dividend, supposing it is a £100 dividend, you have first of all deducted 1s. in the pound for English income tax. Then instead of the local office being in Western Australia it is generally in Adelaide or in Melbourne. You take your cheque to the bank and they charge you 17s. 6d. per cent. exchange, that is £5 17s. 6d. per £100 deducted from you. You have to pay the local dividend tax as well. That is no inducement for Australian shareholders to invest in a mine. I have had a circular given me from London stating that the 1s. in the pound is unlawfully deducted from Australian shareholders because they are not resident in England; but the company in order to save trouble pay in the total dividend before they distribute to the shareholders. If shareholders send particulars they are able to recover the 1s. in pound, less 25 per cent.; and a shareholder here has to pay 25 per cent. to get his own money. The Act should be so amended that a company is compelled to pay the proper dividend to the Australian shareholder. I have nothing farther to say. I trust when the new Companies Bill is brought down it will contain the recommendations of the Commission; and I recommend to members, if they have not read the report of the Boulder Perseverance Commission, they will derive some startling information by doing so.

At 6:30, the ACTING PRESIDENT left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

HON. W. T. LOTON (East): I desire to express my congratulations to you, sir, on being elected Acting President in the absence of our respected President. I believe we may expect Sir George Shenton back very early in October, and I hope he will arrive safely. I do not intend to act upon the suggestion of Mr. Kingsmill to move any amendment to this Address-in-Reply. I think the wording of it is so colourless, it practically expresses no opinion, and we may safely vote upon it as it stands. I would remind members that the wording of it is:—

We, the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in

Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I think we have ample latitude to discuss the various clauses of the Speech, and to criticise it either adversely or in any way we may deem advisable. I wish to be very brief in my remarks, because the Speech has been dealt with very fully on this occasion, and I think I may say on the whole fairly. Whether the criticisms have been acceptable to the leader of the House I am not aware, but there has been no attack, at all events, this being a non-party House. I hope we shall always observe that; and whatever I may be prepared to say, I shall say it in the same spirit as that in which I am uttering these words. To start with, the first two or three clauses of the Speech are in a very congratulatory tone. It says, our chief industries, referring specially to the mining, agricultural, and pastoral industries, are in a very satisfactory condition. After a start like that, one would have expected at all events that the Speech would not have continued in a very different strain. In the very next clause we have a could douche or wet blanket cast upon us straight away:—

The finances of the State will require your close attention. The revenue received, although substantial in amount, has not been sufficient during the year just ended to meet all the demands made upon it.

The finances of the State during the last 11 months have been in charge of the Premier and Treasurer of this State, and if they are in a condition requiring the very close attention of Parliament it seems to me the Government are responsible for the position. To my mind a statement like this in the very forefront of the Speech is likely to have a very dangerous effect upon this State, and the words should not have appeared in this Speech at all. An information might have been given later as to the deficiency, without saying the finances will require the very close attention of Parliament. That is what it means, that they are in a very unsatisfactory state. Practically, it seems to me that it is an admission that the finances are so tangled and in such a serious state that the Government want Parliament to assist them to put them right. They are not able to do it them-

selves. That is a conclusion that may be readily arrived at from those words. [THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: To assist in economy.] Directly afterwards we are told that the policy of the Government is a policy of extra taxation, and a policy of farther borrowing. These are policies which I gather from the Speech. In the first instance, as we are on the question of finance I will deal very briefly with farther borrowing. After the very unsatisfactory results of the last loan, and seeing that from 75 to 80 per cent. is still in the hands of the underwriters—practically about £250,000 has been raised from the public funds outside the colony, the remainder really being underwritten and not raised at all—what chance is there of this State going into the loan market during the next 12 months with any reasonable possibility of success except on the most disastrous terms? It seems to me that the Government should have followed out this question. But no; they propose extra taxation to meet the deficiency and to provide for other expenditure, and although the finances need close attention, the Government are prepared to go in for farther loans to the extent of somewhere about £3,000,000. That is what it amounts to. [HON. G. E. DEMPSTER: About 3½ millions.] Say three millions. I like to give them a little margin. Take the first item. It is said practically we are prepared to spend a million and a-half in the purchase of the Midland Railway and its lands. I am not prepared to discuss the merits and demerits of this scheme at all. It would mean certainly an extra indebtedness of 1½ millions, and the money would have to be borrowed. According to the correspondence that has passed between the Premier and the representative of the vendors, the terms would have to be practically cash within 12 months, with interest at 4 per cent. in the meantime. [THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not necessarily.] Not necessarily, but according to the correspondence there is no question of taking Government stock; not in the last letter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Oh, yes, there should be.

HON. W. T. LOTON: If the hon. member will look up the correspondence he will

see, I believe, if my memory is right, the concluding letter to the Premier is—

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Something was omitted from that, I believe.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Was it omitted from the correspondence to the agent of the vendor?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think so.

HON. W. T. LOTON: One would have supposed that if the correspondence was sent to the paper there would not be half a sentence left out.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I believe you read it in the Press.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Yes.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Press left out a line, so far as I understand.

HON. W. T. LOTON: It seems to me that no steps were taken to prevent the necessity of going to the money market. The indebtedness would be the same, at any rate. If the indebtedness would be upon Government bonds, there would be no necessity to approach the London money market.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is the arrangement.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Then we come to the Midland Railway. I cannot understand why, if the Government came to the determination to recommend the purchase of this line and to endeavour to obtain the sanction of Parliament, they continue to withhold the reports with regard to the state of the line and its value. Why have not members an opportunity of perusing those reports and endeavouring to arrive at a decision? The Government considered it themselves, and have come to a decision upon it. They have told the vendors they are prepared to purchase, provided they can get the consent of Parliament. It seems to me that the Government have something to hide, or else they are afraid of the decision they have arrived at in the first instance. Nothing can be gained by keeping this information back, because as a matter of fact, in the present position, if it goes no farther, if the option is withdrawn or terminates without anything being done, as to any objections that start in the future the Government have established the basis of value, the lowest basis that will ever be submitted to them, and they have established

the basis that the value of that line is a million and a-half. What can be gained by keeping the other evidence back? I do not wish to labour this question. I should be glad if we had the information at the earliest time possible so that we can consider it. I have entirely an open mind on the matter. If it is a fair and reasonable deal and desirable in the interests of the State, looking ahead as well as at the present, the question to me will be whether it is desirable to enter into the purchase. I do not desire to go into the item in the Governor's Speech in detail; because really, as a matter of fact, I cannot myself, from the moderate experience I have in financial matters and political matters also to a certain extent, see how the Government can face the money market to borrow after the disastrous result of the last loan. We shall have to wait. These works will have to stand in abeyance. If we are going on sound practical lines so as not to throw the State back for years, we shall have to wait to borrow money. I do not think many people like an income tax, but in certain circumstances it becomes an absolute necessity. It is the last tax of any importance that is usually imposed; and any Government bringing in a measure of this kind should be prepared to show it is absolutely necessary. If it be so, I shall be prepared to vote for it; but unless I am convinced of the absolute necessity of a tax of this kind, I shall be prepared to oppose the measure. I do not know what an unimproved land tax is. Like Mr. Randell, I do not believe there is any such thing as an unimproved land tax, unless the Government start at the price the Crown fix on the land in the first instance; and they will not do that if they want money. [THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is the unearned increment.] It would be one of the strongest advertisements that the Government could possibly publish to prevent immigration to this State. The land is the very place where we want the people to settle. We want the people to settle on it, cultivate it, utilise it, and improve it. We offer it on cheap, reasonable terms, with a long time for payment; but any Government must realise that it takes years before any return of any value can be obtained from the land.

All kinds of improvements, such as ring-fencing, clearing, ploughing, sowing, and fencing, have to be done and cannot be done in one year or two years. Several years must elapse before a man, even if he has a little capital, can get any return from the soil; and if we have land taxation, depend upon it we are not going to draw people to this country to pay taxes on land, and these are the people we want. We do not wish to draw an excessive population of working men, because we are told that we already have enough. We want the other class of people, mainly the settlers on the land. If a tax of this kind is proposed, I shall be prepared to oppose it most strongly on these grounds. I think it would be in the worst interests of this State to impose it. There is no necessity for it. It has been pointed out time after time that the splendid revenue we have of about three and a-half millions should be ample, if fairly and economically spent in all directions. With the exception of extensive public works of a reproductive nature, such as railways or additions to harbours, our expenditure should be drawn from revenue. Even in the past I do not think it has been good policy on the part of the Governments who have attempted to construct any considerable lengths of railway out of public revenue; because when they have started the works they have had to fall back on loan money, and very often they have had to borrow money to recoup the revenue. Money could be well borrowed for such works when we can go to the money market and show that we are prepared to pay interest; but to borrow now, to my mind, would be a disadvantage to the country. I question whether the loan would even be looked at or recognised at all now or in the near future, say twelve months. [MR. KINGSMILL: The Premier says "eighteen months."] I do not take very much notice of what the Premier says on some occasions, or of some of the paragraphs in this Speech. The Speech is so vague that it makes one wonder whether the Government are really in earnest, whether they really mean buying the Midland Railway or going in for extra works, or bringing forward Bills for extra taxation. With regard to the referendum as to whether this House shall remain in existence or

whether it shall be under a more liberal franchise, I regard the franchise as liberal enough; and I am prepared, so far as I am concerned, to take a position of responsibility in this matter. It has been pointed out on several occasions with regard to the constitution of this House, that there are ten provinces and that one member out of the three for each province goes up for re-election every second year, so that if the people are desirous of doing away with this House they can do it within two years of any election. Next year we will have an election in ten provinces; and if there is a desire to change the franchise of this House or to do away with it altogether, the people can return ten members in favour of its abolition, and then in two years they can return ten more, and the House will be gone. So why the need of a referendum? There is already a method of doing it. Captain Laurie gave us an instance of a referendum in Fremantle. We had a more important referendum than that, the one that decided the question of Federation. What was the result of that referendum? Every State was in favour of it and we got Federation; and now we have been in the federation for four years, and I venture to assert that two years after the vote was taken if another vote had been taken there would have been a distinct change in the vote in almost every State. If a vote had been taken again, I do not believe there is a State in the Commonwealth that would have voted in favour of Federation. I doubt if Victoria would. Tasmania might; but I think that would be the only State. I do not see the necessity for a referendum. When the various Bills proposed in this Speech come along, no doubt every member will be prepared to give them attention. Mr. McKenzie, in moving the Address-in-Reply, referred to the establishing of a Mint in this State, and said that it never ought to have been built and was not paying expenses, and that there was no chance of its doing so. I have before me a brief return giving the actual facts at the present time; and it will show that Mr. McKenzie was entirely wrong. I am surprised that a member representing a mining industry and living in a mining district should have made such a statement. The Mint was built in the interests of the mining

people, and it is a great saving to them; for they can send their small lots of gold to it without the expense of having to send them to other States, and they can get value for the gold straight away. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: And can get the refining done for practically nothing.] I have the figures till June, 1905. These figures are up to date, and we have not yet had the official financial returns for that period.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: They will be published to-morrow in the *Government Gazette*.

HON. W. T. LOTON: The expenditure on the Mint to the end of June, 1905, was £111,130 since its opening in 1899; and the revenue for the same period was £133,848, the profit being £22,718. After paying all working expenses and calculating interest on cost at 3 per cent., the net profit to June 30 was £13,022. If we calculate interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., giving a little in excess of the average rate paid on loans, and allow one per cent. for sinking fund deducted from the net revenue, the profit to the end of June was £8,174. I hope these figures are satisfactory to members. They distinctly refute the statement that we should never have built the Mint, and that it is never likely to pay. I have said nothing about the indirect profit. The Mint was built in the interest of miners. Suppose we had no Mint. Miners would have to send their gold to the other States and pay exchange upon it, and pay labour in the other States, and pay more exchange if the gold were returned, as it would be in many instances, to this State. The Mint is a considerable saving in various ways, and it is a paying concern to the Government. I only desire to add that I hope the result of our deliberations this session will tend to the general advancement of the State.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I wish to add my voice to the chorus of regret at the necessity for the absence of our esteemed President. I can only hope, with other members, that it will not be long before Sir George Shenton returns to this House thoroughly improved in health in every respect. I also wish to congratulate you, sir, on the fact that you have been appointed to fill the position of Acting

President during Sir George Shenton's absence. The fact that you have been chosen is a recognition by the members of this House of the fact that you have discharged the duties of Chairman with ability and impartiality. I must also acknowledge the fair and considerate manner in which the Address-in-Reply was proposed and seconded. Both the proposer and seconder showed a keen appreciation of the difficulties under which the Government labour, seeing that we entered office without Ministerial experience. I think the mover and seconder made all proper concessions necessary under the circumstances. The criticism of the Government has been very free, but I cannot say it has been unfair, and no unworthy motives have been imputed. On the whole, from my experience, even the adverse comments on the present Administration have not been stronger or more violent than those which have been passed on preceding Governments. There is one matter on which many members have spoken, that is in regard to the finances. No doubt the reference in the Governor's Speech to the financial position, saying that the finances of the State will require your close attention, has induced members to direct particular attention to the finances, and some members have stated that the Government have been guilty of gross extravagance. I deny that charge. When we presented to Parliament the Estimates for the past year, every member knows that we anticipated a deficit of £52,000; the year closed with an actual deficit of £46,000, and I say that deficit was none of our making. When we entered office, what did we discover? That the previous Government had made certain promises and pledges, and we were bound to recognise those promises and pledges. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: What were they?] Had we been in office in the previous March, this deficit would not have arisen. The promises and pledges were made in reference to public works in various constituencies, and we felt bound to respect those promises and pledges. We did not respect every pledge made by the late Government, but we did respect many of them. I say that even now our position is no worse than that of the Government which preceded us ;

for the previous Administration started the year 1903 with a credit balance of £231,000, and at the beginning of the next financial year that balance had dwindled to £83,363. There was a deficiency in the administration of public affairs under the James Government amounting to £148,296. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: They were working on a surplus.] They were working on a surplus, and they got through it quickly. I ask members not to condemn the present Government on account of the financial position, unless they are prepared also to condemn the James Government for their financial management. The previous Government went back in one financial year £148,000. We have gone back nearly that much in the last year, but it was owing to the fact that we had to recognise the pledges made by our predecessors. In addition, we were more heavily handicapped by the previous Government, for there was increased expenditure over which we had no control, and our interest bill was increased by £49,000 for the year. There were also arrears due to the Savings Bank on account of the previous Governments not having made any settlement with the Federal Government in regard to taking over the Savings Bank business, and we were pledged to pay the amount that was due. The balance due was £17,068. In addition to that there has been a falling off in the revenue during the last year amounting to £37,346, making a total of £103,414 by which we were handicapped as against the previous Administration. So that if members consider the financial position, they will admit that we had extraordinary difficulties in our path, also that we were young men untried in office; and I think that even if members consider that the deficit with which we ended the year was larger than it ought to be, they should be prepared to admit that at any rate we did creditably under the circumstances. [HON. W. T. LORON: Why draw special attention to the finances in the Governor's Speech?] When the Governor's Speech was prepared, we were not aware of the state of the finances, as the books had not been balanced. In reference to the Midland Railway Company, there was a disposition on the part of some members of this House to condemn the proposed purchase from the very start. They did

not know the value of the railway and the lands, but still some members were prepared to condemn the proposal. As a matter of fact, up to one month ago there was not a solitary soul who knew the exact value of the Midland Railway Company's concession. [HON. R. F. SHOLL: What was it valued at on the London Stock Exchange? £1,053,000.] Members might have formed some fairly accurate idea as to the value of the railway and the rolling-stock, but no one knew the quality of the land within the Company's concession. When the offer of the property was made to us at one and a half millions, we did not know whether that was a fair price or not, but we appointed an officer in the Engineer's Department to value the railway, and we sent two of our most trusted officers—Mr. Paterson, of the Agricultural Bank, and the Surveyor General—to make a thorough classification of the whole of the land, and it took those gentlemen four months to decide what some members here were prepared to decide in two minutes, as to the value of that land. [HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: What is the value of the land?] I am not going to say. Various statements have been made in the criticisms of members, but it is not my intention to reply to them on this occasion. The same reason which justified the Government in asking members not to condemn the report at the present time will justify me in refraining from giving certain information to members, which I might do in the course of my reply on this occasion. I have voluminous notes in connection with the matter, but I have pigeon-holed them carefully. It has been said the Government must have something to hide in opposing the production of the reports which have been asked for. Well, if members think so, let them insist on the production of the reports; but in that case the Government will not accept responsibility. We do not want to arm the Midland Railway Company with all the information we are possessed of, when there seems to be an extreme probability that the whole thing will be off. [HON. W. T. LORON: You have fixed the value.] We did that in order to put the proposal before Parliament; and we would be unworthy of public trust if, after receiving the report and coming to a certain

decision, we did not give to Parliament an opportunity of saying whether the railway and lands should be purchased or not. Mr. Piessé severely slated the present Government and the past Government for refusing to transform homestead farms into C.P. selections. Section 80 of the Land Act states the conditions under which homestead blocks are liable to forfeiture. The previous Minister for Lands framed a regulation carrying out the spirit of the Act, and when I became Minister in succession to him I firmly adhered to the action he had taken. A homestead is a farm that is given for one purpose, in order that a man should make his home there. I may tell the House that it costs £5 to survey one of the homestead blocks, and that work is done free by the Government. Members will see that the object of enabling the conversion of a homestead farm into a C.P. selection is that a large number of persons are not qualified to take them up; and if we were to convert homestead blocks into C.P. selections, the holder of such a block would be able to traffic in the land and perhaps transfer it to a large landowner, which cannot be done now. I shall strongly oppose the conversion of homestead blocks into C.P. selections in order to enable the holder of a homestead farm to traffic with somebody else in regard to that land. Sir F. H. Wittenoom and Mr. Haynes referred to what Canada was doing in the way of immigration. I may inform members that Canada does not grant free, assisted, or nominated passages to immigrants. The principal ports in Canada at which immigrants arrive are Quebec and Montreal, which are ice-bound from November to February in each year. The usual steerage fare from Europe is £3, sometimes as high as £5 10s. No free railway tickets are given to immigrants; but when they arrive they are supplied with all information in connection with the country; and housing accommodation is provided free of charge. They have to pay for everything else. Winnipeg is the great wheat-growing centre, and the lowest fare from a European port to Winnipeg is £8, and there is the cost of living while travelling on the railway. When an immigrant reaches Winnipeg, he has something like 200 miles to go to

reach the land, in some cases; and often the land is 20 to 60 miles from a railway. In the case of an immigrant coming to Western Australia, he has only to travel on the railway from Fremantle about 150 miles to the land and, if a selector, he gets a free pass on the railway; not in the first instance, but if he takes up land and pays a deposit of 50 per cent. in excess of the railway fare, his fare is refunded. The bed-rock sum for which an assisted immigrant from England can get to the land is £15 in Canada as against £7 10s. in Western Australia.

HON. M. L. MOSS: How many came from England to Western Australia last year?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A good many are coming now; more than we are prepared for. That is the trouble which was referred to by Mr. Hamersley. There is at present no means adopted for meeting and assisting immigrants on their arrival. A few weeks ago a married couple came to the State and landed with 5s. in their pockets; and very desirable settlers I think they will make in the course of time. We have no machinery in existence for dealing with such people; for housing them, or providing them with food until they can secure work. It is my intention to do whatever I can to carry out the wise suggestion made by Mr. Hamersley. It has been stated that the Labour party is opposed to an increase of population; but it has no such prejudice. The party is strongly opposed to the introduction to Western Australia of a pauper population. [HON. M. L. MOSS: We all object to that.] Then the hon. member is quite in sympathy with the Labour party. It has been objected that immigration has been totally omitted from His Excellency's Speech. That is so, because the Government were awaiting the report of the Immigration Commission, which has just come to hand. Very severe criticisms have been levelled at the conduct and the result of the operations of that Commission; but I assure members that the information the Commission has obtained will prove of valuable service in the administration of the Lands Department, and will have a great effect on agricultural development.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: Will the report be worth the money paid for it?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think so. It cost only about £1,400. That is a very small amount.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: Does that include everything? The return does not say so.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have a more recent return, in which that is stated. Mr. Kingsmill wanted to know what steps we intended to take with reference to the proposed University. The matter has never been discussed. I do not know whether the hon. member takes any intense interest in it, for he never approached this Government in connection with it. I dare say he exercised his influence while he was a member of a previous Government. So far, we have heard nothing from the board appointed to control the enterprise. [HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: Is Mr. Kingsmill a member of the board?] I cannot say whether he is. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: No; he is not.] A large endowment of land, worth £128,000 I think, was granted for the purpose of this University; and no doubt the Government will be only too glad to know for what purpose this endowment is being used. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: Why do you not ask the Premier?] The Premier says he has never been approached by anyone on the question. [HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Premier is on the board.] As to a sanatorium for consumptives, some two months ago I had a reserve selected by experts, in the vicinity of Mahogany Creek. The financial question has now to be considered; and I hope to be able to give Mr. Kingsmill additional information within the next three or four weeks. The Government had decided to spend some money on a similar sanatorium at Coolgardie; but I found that some £900 would be necessary, and that the benefit would be only temporary. The question now arises whether it is advisable to spend £900 there while we are faced with the necessity of having to put up a much larger sanatorium in the not distant future. On that point we have not yet come to any decision. Mr. Moss scathingly criticises the fact that the Government appointed some Royal Commissions during the past 12 months. It was, said he, a gross abuse of the powers of Government. Mr. Moss was associated with a Government that had a particular leaning to the appointment

of Royal Commissions. Mr. Kingsmill also condemned our action. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: Those Commissions did not include members of Parliament.] Members of Parliament also; very large fees members of Parliament drew from those Commissions during the term of office of the James and Leake Governments. I have here the names of a few of those commissions: Railways and Coal Mines, Collie Coal, Coolgardie Water Scheme, Donnybrook Stone, Public Service—which cost some thousands of pounds—Metropolitan Sewerage and Water Supply, Spear-Parker, Forestry, Mining and Italian Labour, Sanitation and Ventilation of Mines, and Aborigines.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: How much did the members of Parliament get?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I remember reading of one member who drew as much as £124.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I do not think I was in the Government when one of those Commissions was appointed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then the hon. member can scarcely have been in the Government at all, according to the dates I have here.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I was in it for only 12 months, I think, and then only as an honorary Minister.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Ocean Freights Commission was appointed by the present Government for the following reason. A select committee of another place investigated the matter, and at the conclusion of last session it had failed to complete its labours, and the work would have been valueless unless some other steps had been taken; so the Government appointed a Commission of three to complete that investigation. The appointment of Dr. Roth was not originally made by the present Government, although the Government were formally obliged to gazette his appointment as commissioner. For his appointment the preceding Administration were responsible. [HON. W. KINGSMILL: He is not a member of Parliament.] Mr. Moss asked what the Government proposed to do to relieve the congestion in the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum. We intend to spend this year something like £40,000 on the Claremont Home for the Insane. During last year we spent £15,317—£317 in excess of the

amount voted by Parliament. During the preceding year there was only, I think, £125 spent. From the 30th June, 1904, to the same date 1905 we spent £15,317.

HON. M. L. MOSS: That must be incorrect, because I know there was £2,000 spent on a bore.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not want to make a point of that, but simply mention it to show that we are doing the best we can. We are to spend £40,000 this year, and cannot now afford more. Mr. Moss drew attention to the need for amending Sections 41 and 42 of the Stamp Act. I shall inform the Treasurer of this matter; and if, as Mr. Moss points out, a promissory note is invalid if not stamped on the date of making, I think that is a serious matter, and that an amending Act should be passed with the least possible delay. Mr. Haynes said an effort should be made to bring about a reduction in the fares of immigrants from the old country. [HON. S. J. HAYNES: That was only a suggestion.] The Government have forestalled the hon. member, with the result that instead of £15 being charged as previously, the passage money is now £13 10s., and it will be possible for any immigrant to come here from the old country for £5 10s., with Government assistance. Mr. Clarke referred to the Aborigines Bill; and I am pleased to state to-night that the Bill will be introduced in the very same form, save for a few additions, as it was last session when it left the Legislative Council for another place. The Government have gone carefully into the amendments made by this Chamber; we have had some farther reports, and we have concluded that the amendments are wise and absolutely necessary.

HON. G. RANDALL: What about the appointment of Dr. Roth?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Dr. Roth has never made any application to the Government for appointment. There will be some additions to that Bill for the purpose of disarming natives—preventing them from carrying guns and rifles. If members can suggest any other amendments for the protection of the white race from the natives, whom I do not at all regard as lambs, the suggestions will be considered. I have had

some experience of natives, some of whom I think are very crafty and treacherous. Every precaution must be taken not only to protect the natives but to protect the whites who are endeavouring to obtain a living in the northern parts of this State. Mr. Randell referred to the fact that an expenditure of £16,966 on harbours and rivers appeared under the head of loan. In consequence of that statement I made inquiries, and discovered that the item always appears under that heading; that the money expended on improvements to harbours and rivers is always expended out of loan. That has been the custom for many years.

HON. G. RANDELL: I am inclined to question that.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am assured that is so. Various other matters have been debated by members. As to the proposed tax on unimproved land values, some member said it would deter land settlement. But the Government do not contemplate imposing any tax on conditional purchasers; therefore any man who takes up a conditional purchase—say three months hence, when this tax will probably be in force—will be free from such taxation for the next 20 years.

HON. A. DEMPSTER: What about the cash applicant?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Only a small percentage of applicants is ever prepared to put down cash. In fact, anyone who comes along with cash is regarded with grave suspicion. I will not discuss such subjects as old age pensions. I shall have ample opportunity when the Bills come before this Chamber. Various other subjects have been touched; but I do not think it wise or necessary to discuss them now. Ample opportunity will be afforded members who want to see the Bills and study the clauses of the measures which it is proposed to bring before the House. I thank members, in conclusion, for the very reasonable criticism of our programme. I hope a great many members will change their minds before I have an opportunity of presenting the Bills to the House, and that I shall receive strong support when the measures are before members.

Question—that the Address-in-Reply be agreed to—put and passed on the voices.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Acting President was authorised to present the Address to His Excellency the Governor.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message received from the Governor, assenting to Supply Bill.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, "That the House at its rising do adjourn until Wednesday next."

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: What could be ready for Wednesday next?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was impossible to say whether anything would be ready; but the Midland Railway question might have to be discussed. If we adjourned until Tuesday week, that would be tantamount to saying to the country that we were not prepared to discuss the Midland Railway. The option expired on the 31st July, and Tuesday week would be the 1st of August. If the presence of country members was required, he would communicate with them by telegraph, but he did not think they would have to come down. Those members living in the city might attend on Wednesday, for they might be required on that or the following day.

Question passed.

The House adjourned at 8:35 o'clock, until the next Wednesday.
