

the season they are having in that district to-day, that thousands of pounds worth of wheat would have been forthcoming for Western Australia in this trying juncture. I do not know whether it is the intention of the Government to bring forward that Bill again, but if they do I hope members will look upon it in a kindly light in the interests of the people of Western Australia. No doubt the members of the Country party realise the necessity for railways through their respective districts, and also realise the necessity for a railway being constructed through the splendid land in the Esperance district. As a goldfields member, may I say that whilst I am always prepared to assist any movement in respect of the farming industry, I want something more done than has been done in the immediate past for the mining industry. I was expecting that a new Mines Regulation Bill would have been brought down this session, but no doubt, as such a measure is necessarily of a contentious nature, the Government have wisely held it over for a future session. Whilst the Government have done a great deal to assist in opening up mines, and in assisting mining companies in Western Australia, something more will have to be done to assist the prospector. The mining industry has supplied the means for the Parliament of the country to make it possible for people to go on the land, and whilst the farming industry is practically in its infancy to-day, mining is turning out a great amount of gold, and our yield last month was well up to the average established since gold has been produced in the State. It behoves the Government to watch carefully the interests of the mining industry and mining generally, so that prospectors may be sent out into new country. Probably well equipped men would do a great deal towards opening up some districts that at present are languishing for want of practical workers. I do not wish to take up further time. This is an occasion on which the Address-in-reply debate is expected to be of a formal character, and so I will content myself with moving the resolution.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [3.30]: I second the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. P. Colebatch, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.31 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 3rd December, 1914.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. A. R. Grant).

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONERS.

A Message from the Commissioners appointed by the Governor to do all things necessary for the opening of Parliament requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber; and hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour Mr. Justice Burnside, having been commissioned by the Governor, appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 50 members as representatives of the Legislative Assembly.

All the members elected were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by Statute, and signed the roll.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [12.40], addressing the Clerk, said: Mr. Grant, the House being duly constituted, it is now our duty and privilege to elect an hon. member to preside over our deliberations. I therefore move—

That Mr. Troy do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

Mr. Troy acted as Speaker during the last Parliament and I think he gave such satisfaction to both sides of the House that, with the possibilities of a strenuous time ahead, and the necessity of having someone who will take an impartial view of questions which have to be submitted to the Chair, we cannot do better than ask Mr. Troy to again accept the position of Speaker. I have much pleasure in submitting the motion.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [12.41]: Mr. Grant, I am going to take the unusual course, perhaps, from a party point of view of seconding the nomination of Mr. Troy for the position of Speaker. I do so on several grounds. At the present juncture, during the terrible crisis through which the whole of the Empire is passing, we deem it necessary—and I take it I am expressing the views of all hon. members—to avoid as much as possible any party controversy in the proceedings of the Parliament of Western Australia, and therefore I have pleasure in endorsing the remarks which have fallen from the Premier with regard to the personality of Mr. Troy in

the Chair. I have sat under Mr. Troy as Speaker during the past three years; I have suffered at his hands occasionally—

The Premier: So have I.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And no doubt in the heat of the moment I perhaps felt that I had unjustly suffered, but nevertheless I recognised on more mature deliberation that Mr. Troy had on all occasions—and I have readily granted it to him—endeavoured to carry out his duties in an impartial, dignified manner to himself and to the position he occupied. That being so, I do not think we can do better than unanimously ask Mr. Troy to again take the position which he has filled successfully and with satisfaction to the House for three years. Under the circumstances I have very much pleasure in seconding the motion moved by the Premier.

Mr. TROY (Mount Magnet) [12.44]: Mr. Grant, and hon. members, I thank you for the high honour you have conferred upon me and I consent to the nomination.

The SPEAKER-ELECT having been conducted to the Chair by the mover and seconder of the motion, said [12.45]: I desire to thank hon. members for having unanimously re-elected me to the position of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I would not be human if I were not flattered by the kindly remarks which have been uttered respecting myself by both the Premier and the leader of the Opposition. I feel that the position during this Parliament will require the exercise of all the tact and discretion of which I am capable, and I hope that I shall be able to live up to the high expectations of all hon. members of this Assembly. I desire to assure hon. members that, with their assistance and forbearance, I will do my very utmost to be impartial and fair towards hon. members of this House.

Congratulations.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER (Irwin) [12.47]: Mr. Speaker, the honour of congratulating you generally falls to the privilege either of the Premier or of your

second. It affords me, however, very great pleasure indeed to congratulate you, Sir, upon your election to the highest office within the gift of this House. Now, when we enter Parliament, or re-enter Parliament, frequently we come with high ideals of what our conduct shall be in Parliament. Unfortunately, these high ideals are not always realised. Speaking for the party which I have the honour of representing, I would say that by the recognition of the fact that the motive of every member of this House is as high as our own, and by trying—I say trying advisedly—to follow the best traditions of debate in this House, and by refraining from those expressions which leave behind them either a personal sting or a personal wound, we hope to assist in maintaining alike the dignity of your high office, our own personal dignity, and the dignity of this House in the eyes of the people of this State.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER-ELECT.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brownhill - Ivanhoe) [12.49]: Mr. Speaker, His Excellency the Governor has intimated that he will be pleased to receive hon. members for their purpose of presenting you to His Excellency at one o'clock. Hon. members will therefore perhaps attend His Excellency the Governor with you. I understand the sitting will not be suspended until after you, Sir, return and again take the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. M. F. Troy): I shall now proceed to His Excellency the Governor for the purpose of securing his approval of my election as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I hope hon. members who care to go will accompany me.

Sitting suspended from 12.50 to 1.10 p.m.

On resuming,

Mr. SPEAKER said: I have to report that I have submitted myself to His Excellency and on behalf of the House have

laid claim to its undoubted rights and privileges and prayed that the most favourable construction might be placed upon its proceedings, and that His Excellency has been pleased to express his satisfaction at the choice of the Assembly in the following terms:—

The Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, It is with much pleasure that I learn that you have been again elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly to the high and honourable office of Speaker of that House. I have every confidence that you will fill the office in a worthy and dignified manner, and I have the honour to affirm the constitutional rights and privileges hitherto enjoyed by the Legislative Assembly of this State. Harry Barron, Governor.

Sitting suspended from 1.12 to 3 p.m.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Governor's Speech in formally opening the session of Parliament (*vide* Council report *ante*); and having returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber, Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Assent to the following Bills of last session reported:—

- Bills of Sale Act Amendment.
- East Perth Railway Siding Bill.
- Geraldton Agricultural and Horticultural Society's Land.
- Leederville Rates Validation.
- Licensing Act Amendment.
- Perth Municipal Gas and Electric Lighting Act Amendment.
- Plant Diseases.
- Rights in Water and Irrigation.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Government Tramways, receipts and expenditure for quarter ended 30th September. 2, Govern-

ment Railways, statement of receipts and expenditure for the quarter ended 30th September, 1914; 3, Report on the establishment of a superannuation fund for the employees of the Government of W.A.; 4, Report of the trustees of the Public Library and Museum for the year ended 30th June, 1914; 5, Statement of Life Assurance Companies; 6, Tramway fares and conditions, amendment of by-laws.

By the Minister for Mines: 1, Statement of expenditure for the financial year 1913-14 under the Mining Development Vote; 2, Amendment of by-laws under the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act; 3, Amendment of by-laws under the Goldfields Water Supply Act; 4, Timber regulations under the Land Act, 1898; 5, Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Department, second annual report.

By the Minister for Lands: 1, Report of the Under Secretary for Lands for the year ended 30th June, 1914; 2, Report of the Surveyor General for the year ended 30th June, 1914; 3, By-laws and regulations under the Cemeteries Act, 1897.

By the Minister for Works: 1, By-laws made by (a) Municipalities of North Fremantle, South Perth, Kalgoorlie, Bunbury; (b) roads boards of Merredin, Esperance, Greenbushes, Dowerin, Nelson, Toodyay, Tammin, Meekatharra, Day Dawn, Busselton; 2, Dog Act, 1903, additional regulations.

By the Honorary Minister: Annual reports of (a) Charities Department, (b) State Children Department.

By Mr. Speaker: Report of the Auditor General.

BILL—WAGIN-KUKERIN RAILWAY EXTENSION.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan), by leave without notice (by way of asserting privilege), introduced a Bill for the extension of the Wagin-Kukerin railway to Lake Grace.

Bill read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER announced that copies of the Governor's opening Speech had been distributed to members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

Mr. HEITMANN (Geraldton) [3.42]: In moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply to His Excellency's Speech, I may remark that the duty of complying with one of the formalities incidental to this period in this Chamber has, I understand, been entrusted to me because I am one of the only two new members of the House sitting on the Government side. Speaking personally for a moment I feel a great deal of pleasure in again entering the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, because I have many pleasant recollections of the period I spent in it, extending over something like 9½ years. Before dealing with the subject matter contained in His Excellency's Speech—and I think hon. members will probably agree with me when I say that there is very little in the Speech—I should like to offer to you, Mr. Speaker, my heartiest congratulations on your being again elected, and on this occasion unanimously, to the position which you have already occupied for three years with credit to yourself and to this Assembly. May I say that during those three years you have had, comparatively speaking, light duties thanks to the fact that there were 33 members on one side of the House and only a poor lone 16 or 17 on the other? As a result your duties, Mr. Speaker, during the past three years have not been of a very arduous nature. It is possible or even probable that during the next three years you will find the position one of greater difficulty. I think, however, I am expressing the view of the majority of members, if not of every member, of this Chamber when I say that members will render you every assistance in the carrying out of your duties. Upon the opening of Parliament it is customary to offer congratulations all round. On this occasion I should like to congratulate the

member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson) on being once more elected leader of the 16. During the elections I was at one period very sad, because I was informed that there was a possibility of the defeat of the member for Sussex. Even allowing for the return of the present member for Irwin (Mr. Jas. Gardiner), I had to deplore the fact that it would be a matter of difficulty to find a leader for the Liberal side of the House. Then I understood the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) was mentioned. It was said that there was a probability of his being defeated also.

Mr. S. Stubbs: What has that to do with the Address-in-reply?

Mr. HEITMANN: There is another Labour member interjecting.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Anyway, I did not lose my seat like you did.

Mr. HEITMANN: I think the hon. member should not be so unkind. We did all we could for him. It was a most difficult job to get the hon. member returned, but we did our best. I would also like, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate our old friend, the leader of the Country party. I am sure there are many people in this State—I am included among the number myself, old in politics I mean—who are pleased to see Mr. Gardiner back in the House. I believe he will be an acquisition to the Chamber. Although in the past he has been somewhat versatile I believe he will at last settle down with the party to which he belongs, and to which he will be a credit and which will be a credit to him. As far as our own side is concerned, I hardly know what to say. The Premier suggests that I should make my remarks, like His Excellency's Speech, very brief.

Mr. George: We are sorry we did not make you briefer.

Mr. HEITMANN: No doubt the hon. member did his best. This side of the House, at all events, went out with an overwhelming majority and came back with a narrow one. Still we are not despondent.

The Premier: Are we downhearted?

Mr. HEITMANN: Although the Press has informed us that the Labour party has been defeated, we still find ourselves with 26 supporters sitting on this side of the Chamber. With regard to our worthy friend, the hon. member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson) the only difficulty I have in drawing a line of demarcation between him and Mr. Gardiner is that I would like to see the position of leader of the Opposition first of all settled once and for all. At the present time members on this side of the House are not aware as to who is actually the leader of the Opposition. I am particularly pleased to see, Mr. Speaker, representatives of the agricultural industry with a party of their own. I shall be particularly interested to hear the views of those hon. members, because for years past, or at all events in the last two years, the farming people have expressed a wholesome want of faith both in the Labour party and in the Liberal party, and it will be interesting indeed to old members in this Chamber to listen to the ideas and views of these direct representatives of the agricultural industry, coming as they do fresh from the platform. It will also be interesting to hear what they are going to put forward in the direction of taking the place of what has been done for the farmers in the past. I would like to say that, during my 9½ years' experience in this Chamber, I know of no industry and no body of men in the State which have received more sympathy and more actual assistance from both the Liberal party and the Labour party than the agricultural industry and those engaged therein. I have often said on the public platform that from my experience, and from the assistance and sympathy which have been extended towards the farmers during the past few years, it is indeed a matter of impossibility for me to find where sympathy is going to be extended or increased in this direction. As regards the farming industry I would say as in the past—for I represent a number of farmers now—that I am quite prepared to extend every assistance to the farming industry, but that

I also expect the farmers themselves in return to extend that same sympathy and assistance towards other industries of the State.

Mr. George: They are the backbone of the State.

Mr. HEITMANN: Then I am not surprised that at times this State is pretty wobbly.

Mr. George: They have had a stiffening up now.

Mr. HEITMANN: It is usual to refer to the elections when a new Parliament is assembled, and I just want to make a few remarks upon this question. Since the election, and some time prior to it, we have heard the usual stories about inflated rolls or more properly, or more classically, stuffed rolls. It has been stated that, were it not for the fact that the rolls had been stuffed a greater number of members on this side of the Chamber would have been defeated. I am just speaking from my own personal experience in the matter because I have been accused by a newspaper in the State of deliberately stuffing the Geraldton roll.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They accused you of being a German.

Mr. HEITMANN: If I had been accused of being a Chinaman I would rather have owned to that than to the other accusation. It has been stated more than once, and indeed quite a number of times, in a newspaper known as *The Sunday Times*, that the Geraldton roll had been stuffed. I want to say that it appears to me that the editor of that paper made a very reckless statement indeed. It seems to me that he takes up a roll and that, because there is a greater number there on the roll than he thinks should be there, he says that Heitmann or the Labour party must have done something wrong. I would like members of this House to know that the view I take is this, that when a member is accused of stuffing the rolls, he is accused of committing an offence against the Electoral Act. I want to say to the editor of this paper, and its proprietors—

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): And its managing director.

Mr. HEITMANN: I want to say to them that, if it can be proved—and I issue them the heartiest invitation—that I or any member of my committee or any of my supporters, placed a name on the Geraldton roll which was not qualified to be there, I shall retire. There is a fair and square challenge to *The Sunday Times* and the other newspapers which have been going on about the stuffing of rolls. Speaking on electoral matters it may not be out of place if I refer further to the electoral office. Notices of question have been given in regard to this office. I am certainly of opinion that the time has arrived when the State should endeavour to curtail the expenditure in regard to electoral matters. It seems to me a most stupid policy that in one town you should have two electoral offices, costing just on £1,000 a year, namely, Commonwealth and State offices. I refer to Geraldton in the constituency I represent. The sooner the Government take into consideration the question of conferring with the Federal Government in order that we may have one set of rolls, the better it will be for the State and the purity of the rolls, and the better it would be for the economical carrying out of the work.

The Premier: The hon. member does not appreciate the fact that the Opposition will not permit men who are inmates of charitable institutions to be placed on the rolls of the State, and that is the difference between the State and the Commonwealth.

Mr. HEITMANN: I think that position could be overcome by the two Parliaments. At all events it seems to me to be a mistake. During the last few months there has not been a great deal of commonsense exhibited in the State Electoral Department, and I have seen some extraordinary things in connection with it. The reason why the rolls in the Geraldton electorate are inflated—and I suppose it applies to many other parts of the State—is because of the system of agencies of the different parties. It was rather remarkable that my opponent

at the last election should have complained of the inflated state of the roll, and that he had to pay a man to canvass the district and get people put on the roll. As soon as a man or a woman is qualified to be placed on the roll these agents put them on.

Mr. George: Some put them on before then, I think.

Mr. HEITMANN: The mind of the hon. member cannot be very pure seeing that he is continually interjecting in this way. I have heard a great deal from hon. members, and I have read a lot in the Press about the great desire of the individual for a vote, as well as the great desire of the individual to be placed on several rolls and to be able to vote a number of times. In all my experience I have never met a single individual who has even expressed his desire to vote more than once, never in my life.

The Premier: There is a Liberal member in the Legislative Council who did so.

Mr. HEITMANN: I have never come into contact with an individual who either desired to get on the roll wrongfully or desired to vote twice when on the roll. The probability is that we place them on the roll, and that the system of transfer is not observed. There is not a sufficient check down here. I could point out cases where names have been on the roll twice—there are 50 or 60 on the Geraldton roll of this kind. I could point to a case where one particular individual had been dead for the last 10 years, but his name was still on the roll.

Mr. George: I know of a case where the man had been dead for 25 years.

Mr. HEITMANN: An hon. member has just interjected that this is a reflection on the Electoral Department. I want to say that my desire is to reflect on the work of this Department. No effort, no genuine effort, has been made to keep the roll in a fair state.

Mr. Taylor: That is purely administration.

Mr. HEITMANN: I have a right to complain of these things which are purely administrative, and just at present I am complaining of the Electoral Department. So far as I and my sup-

porters in Geraldton are concerned, there was no effort of any kind—if there had been I should have known of it, and I do not know of one—to place any man or woman on the roll unless he or she was qualified to be there. Perhaps at this stage it is appropriate to refer just for a moment to the first paragraph of the Speech which has to do with the war of nations. I think every hon. member in this Chamber will agree with the sentiments expressed therein. It seems to me to be dreadful, even extraordinary, that with all the vaunted civilisation of races, we find the world at war. I think we will all agree with the paragraph which expresses the hope that the war will come to an early termination. I think we will also agree that it would be unwise to finish the war until that imbecile (to be as kind as possible towards him), that monstrosity in human form, the Kaiser, is completely defeated. It would be a sad day in my opinion indeed, if ever the German Empire became the dominant country in the world, and sad for the people, not only of the Allies, but for the people of Germany also, that they should come under, if they ever should do so, the iron heel of militarism. We are making sacrifices, and there are men enlisting in all parts of the British Empire, but rather than that the British Empire should be defeated, if we were to sacrifice every man available for duty, and win in the end, the sacrifice would be worth while. I sincerely hope, and I think every hon. member will agree with me, that the war will soon be over; and I believe they will feel with me that this war was to come; that it has been planned for years, and that perhaps it is better that it should have come now than a few years hence when it would have been more difficult for the German army to have been defeated. There is only one other matter that I wish briefly to mention. This is also referred to in the Speech, and has to do with the disaster which has befallen this State, in common with other States of the Commonwealth, namely, the drought. The undoubtedly bad time which we are experiencing just now is due almost en-

tirely to the failure of the crops. In the Victoria district, possibly the conditions are slightly better than in some of the other areas, but even there, there has been an enormous decrease in the production as compared with the previous season. In 1913, the Victoria district produced 2,560,000 bushels of wheat; this year the estimate is about 400,000 bushels. The average last year was $15\frac{1}{2}$ bushels, while this year it is expected to be 1.7 bushels. In regard to hay, in 1913 the district yielded 37,000 tons, while this year we shall have only 14,000 tons. It can easily be appreciated what this means, and in the district I represent the effect is most noticeable. We usually have there between 1,000 and 1,200 men employed as labourers during the harvesting season, and in fact practically all the year round. This year there are no men employed, or at least there are very few, and the result is that we find them in the town. The farmer should have every assistance to keep him on the land, and that I contend is the policy which it will pay the country to adopt. There are also the farm labourers to be considered. One only has to look at the battalion of unemployed which marched in front of Parliament House to-day. It makes one wonder how we are going to overcome the difficulty. It does not pay the country to keep these men unemployed; it would pay us to find work for them, and particularly does it not pay us to follow the policy we are adopting at the present time in regard to what is known as the soup kitchen. While I have every sympathy for these men, I would stipulate that the meal tickets issued to them should be earned by them. It would be preferable to give these men some work to do even if it amounted to only one day a week, so that they might earn a sufficient number of tickets which would enable them to get food and a bed.

Mr. S. Stubbs: There is plenty of work for them in the country.

Mr. HEITMANN: I am happy to hear the hon. member say so.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Remunerative work, too.

Mr. HEITMANN: The hon. member's information is quite different from that

received by the authorities who are in charge of the Labour bureau. If it is true that there is plenty of work in the country, no one could convince me that it could not be found by some of the unemployed we have amongst us to-day.

Mr. S. Stubbs: There is plenty of remunerative work if the Government will only start it.

Mr. HEITMANN: Now I understand what the hon. member means. As a matter of fact, we could find employment for thousands if we only had the money.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It is better to employ them in the country than in the city.

Mr. HEITMANN: I agree with the hon. member. It would be a better policy for the Government to adopt even to make some of these people break stones or do anything so long as they were employed. A big majority of them do not want charity at the hands of the State. I believe that the expenditure on meals alone is between £500 and £600 a month. This, to my way of thinking, is a positive waste. The suggestion I have made could be followed, and I hope the Honorary Minister who controls the Charity Department will adopt a policy of this kind and see that the men are enabled to live a little more independently by doing some kind of work for the assistance they are receiving. It is the natural corollary to a bad season to find unemployed amongst us. My friends opposite will say that it is due to bad government that the finances of the State have been for some time past in a bad way, and it has concerned all to find that the deficit has been growing month by month. This is a big question and one which I hope the Government and this House will tackle as far as possible—I refer to the question of stopping the further growth of the deficit. I believe that during the next few months we shall have an even worse time than we have experienced in the past few months, and whether the Government like it or not, or whether the Opposition or the country like it or not, the fact stares us in the face that the revenue at present being collected is not sufficient to cover the cost of the services of the people, and some fresh form of

taxation will have to be introduced. In the Governor's Speech mention is made of the intention to introduce an amendment to the Dividend Duty Act. I agree that without doing injustice to any individual, there is room to collect a little more revenue from the source proposed. When the Government of the last Parliament introduced what was known as the war tax, it was most bitterly opposed inside and outside of Parliament. All kinds of stories were built up for the benefit of the electors to show that that proposed tax was going to ruin hundreds of people in the State, and that, as a matter of fact, it would ruin the State itself. While there is no mention made now of any intention to reintroduce that measure even in a modified form, I would like to express the opinion that it is the bounden duty of the Government to submit to Parliament an increase in the income tax in order to tide over the difficulties which have presented themselves. This will mean that those who can afford to pay will be expected to pay a little more towards the management of the country. At the present time there are people who are working for the Government whose work and wages have been reduced by about 25 per cent. This means that these people are being taxed to that extent and that married men with families have been made to suffer. It is all very well to tax these people in such a way, but I would ask hon. members whether it would not be much better to introduce a systematic and scientific form of taxation instead of bleeding this or that individual in an unscientific way. If there is no taxation, it seems to me that there must be retrenchment. It is impossible to finance the State on the revenue we are receiving today. Possibly my friends opposite will say that a better Government might be able to overcome the difficulty. The Opposition promised that they were going to finance the country without resorting to extra taxation and they denied that they were going to retrench or reduce salaries. I remember, however, that in 1905 when some statement was made about the Daglish party proposing to introduce fresh taxation, Mr. Rason, who

was then leader of the Liberals, poo-pooed the idea and told the people that he would be able to carry on without imposing any additional burden, just as the leader of the Opposition told the people a few weeks ago. But what happened? Immediately Mr. Rason was returned in 1905 he somersaulted and submitted a land and income tax measure.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Mr. Rason did not introduce that.

Mr. HEITMANN: Then it was Mr. Rason's Government, or the Moore Government that followed shortly afterwards. The policy of our Liberal friends in times of stress in the past throughout Australia has been to reduce salaries and to retrench. I see no reason when bad times come upon us why the civil servant should be picked out to pay any more taxation than any other individual in the community. He should pay just as much and no more. Possibly our worthy friend, the leader of the Country party, when he launches the policy of his party before this House, will tell us that the most equitable proposal will be a poll tax. That is the suggestion that the Country party, so I am led to believe, intend to make to square the finances of the State. The farmers, whether they have any money or not, will be compelled to pay £1 per head, and everybody in the State will have to do the same. Probably my friend the member for Nelson (Mr. Willmot) will repudiate that policy, but as I have been in the bush I am not certain whether there has been a repudiation of it. I have no desire to keep the House any longer. I know there are greater attractions for our worthy friends outside. I therefore have much pleasure in moving the following Address-in-reply to the Governor's opening Speech:—

May it please Your Excellency—We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) [4.13]: I have very much pleasure in seconding the

motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply to His Excellency's Speech. The Speech is a short one, and as a good example of brevity has been set by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, and as it is the desire of the Government to terminate the session this month, I intend to follow on the lines adopted by the hon. member and make my remarks on this occasion as brief as possible. It is true that the Speech does not contain very much. We are given to understand that the reason for its brevity is that in this session we are not going to deal with anything of a contentious nature. That is the wisest course, recognising as we do that the Empire is engaged in war, the effect of which is reflected in this as well as in other States of the Commonwealth. It must have made hon. members' hearts bleed when they saw to-day the great number of unemployed who were outside Parliament House. It is our desire, no matter what side of the House we may be sitting on, to see that our fellow citizens shall at least have the right to secure employment. And this presented itself almost as a skeleton at the feast. I felt glad that the Labour party had a majority of one, because even the unemployed recognise that they have more to expect from the Labour party in the way of sympathetic administration than from any other party, judging by their experience of the past. I have no doubt that under the most trying circumstances the present Government will do their utmost for the unemployed. I recognise that until the good seasons return the position is going to be a difficult one. We have the question of drought mentioned in the Speech, and, as an embryo farmer, I have been hit up by the dry season, together with the members of the Country party and several members of the Liberal party. We have put our little amounts of money into the farming industry, and like thousands of others, we have been bitten. We recognise that the man upon the land who is trying to get a living by what he can wrest from the closed fist of nature is deserving of the greatest assistance possible, and I have no doubt that the Government are going to furnish that assistance. This

is not an unselfish policy, because I think it goes almost without saying that as far as any assistance has been given to our friends in the country, to the farming community, no Government have done so much as have the Labour Government, notwithstanding which on this occasion the farmers have seen fit to form a separate party. I do not join issue with them on their taking up that position, because the farmers, as well as the workers, know what is best for them when they return direct representatives to Parliament. As a tribute I would like to add that members of the Liberal party last session did their utmost in bringing before the House the difficulties from which the farmers were suffering. Reference has been made to the financial agreement arranged with the Federal Government. I am pleased to see that the Federal and the State Governments are drawing closer together, and are working more in harmony than they have done in the past. It is because we have the Labour party in power in the national Parliament, and the Labour party in power also in this State that the two bodies are working along harmonious lines. An amendment of the Divident Duties Act is foreshadowed. I regret that it is not possible—and certainly under the present constitution of another place it is scarcely possible—that the War Emergency Bill should be passed into law. I am satisfied that that measure was one of the most democratic ever placed before this or any other legislative chamber in the British Empire. I believe that even the members of the direct Opposition, whose pockets were going to be touched, realise right down in their hearts and consciences that taxation of that kind is necessary and just. In another place, and in this place also, the argument was used last session that the working classes on the goldfields did not desire this war tax. Since then the working classes on the Golden Mile, at least, have proved that they are prepared to make sacrifices; almost on every mine in that district the men are making voluntary contributions to patriotic and Belgian funds, which amount to just as much as the war emergency tax would have de-

manded from them. The European war has been referred to, and with the member for Geraldton (Mr. Heitmann) I deplore the fact that it should have been possible in the twentieth century for such a war to be brought about. I thought it was impossible that such enlightened nations as Germany and England should be involved in war. However, facts have proved that the Empire is engaged in war, and I am idealistic enough to believe there is only one way out of international war. I believe that with the Labour party, instead of the military party, in power in Germany the present war would have been impossible. I believe that all the peace Conventions, are as naught compared with the fact that it is necessary to get into power people whose very existence and whose sole interests are against war between brother and brother; because no matter of what nationality the people of Europe, I take it that the one red blood flows through all their veins. I am satisfied there is not a member of this Chamber who has not in mind some worthy German friend as white as white men can be, and we have nothing but sorrow in thinking that their nation is engaged in a deadly war with ours. One lesson is brought home to us by the present war, namely, that we have the first opportunity of measuring what the gold-mining industry means to this State. By a peculiar coincidence the drought has overtaken us in this country, the spectre of drought has walked abroad in the land, and the farming industry for this year has practically failed. Other industries, such as the pearl-shell industry, are largely hampered because of the cutting off of several markets which in times of peace would absorb their product. Consequently, I defy any hon. member to point to any industry at the present time which is contributing as much as the mining industry towards keeping the economic conditions of this country in a satisfactory condition. In the town which I have the honour to represent, the industrial conditions are better than they have ever been in the history of the goldfields. I want to add, however, as

a note of warning, that there is a large number of men out of work up there, due to the fact that other great mining centres, such as Broken Hill, have almost come to a standstill, with the result that a large number of men have made their way to the Eastern goldfields, where many are now unemployed. Nevertheless, the condition in regard to employment is as good as it was before the war. Prior to the war 13,020 men were engaged in the industry, and 13,020 men are engaged to-day, thanks to this staple industry, which indeed I might remind the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) is the backbone of the State, and has so proved itself on this occasion. I am glad to see—and I say it without any bitterness, although I believe there is an end to toleration of treachery—I am glad to see that a certain gentleman who was a member of the House, and who, having made a fortune out of the industry, declared that the bottom had fallen out of mining in this State, has been measured by another community which stood for fairplay, and which relegated that gentleman to the oblivion he deserved. The mining industry in this State produced to the end of last month £119,681,000 worth of gold, and paid 24½ million pounds in dividends. The importance of this industry, not only to this State, but also to the Commonwealth and New Zealand and Papua included, can scarcely be realised. For every hundred ounces raised in Australasia, we raised 51.22 ounces last year. The dividends paid this year, to the end of October, amounted to £673,253, and the area of our goldfields is 329,827 square miles, which is a larger territory than the whole of the mother State of New South Wales. With this brief reference to what the great industry has done and is doing for the State, an industry which is actually the backbone of the State, I would like to thank the Government for what they have done and are doing for the industry. Since the 1st October, to cope with the present war conditions the Minister for Mines has brought in a scale of reduced crushing charges for low-grade ores under

nine dwts. This will mean a ten per cent. reduction on all dirt paying less than nine dwts., and ranging to a 40 per cent. reduction on dirt of less than six dwts. This concession will materially help the prospector in the back country; and it has to be borne in mind, seeing that mining ventures are not popular in the Old Country, that the whole of the back country and a large part of the goldfields depends on the prospector for what may be discovered in the future. Advances have also been made against the value of base metals won since the outbreak of the war. At the present time, on account of the war, we might reasonably suppose that the base metal, lead, would be in great demand; but there is absolutely no demand for lead at present in Swansea, which is the great port in the Old Country through which it is imported. At the present time lead is practically unsaleable. The Labour Government have stepped into the breach and advanced 90 per cent. on the value of lead won, placing it on the basis of the average price for the last 14 years, an absolutely safe margin to go upon, and one which will at the same time enable the lead mining industry to still continue. Advances are also being made against copper. When I point out that some speculators in copper have offered certain mining companies in this State over £40 per ton, and that the present price, since the Government stepped in, is £55, while Mr. Montgomery assures me that it will go up to £60, it is plainly evident that the Government have saved the copper producer 50 per cent. on the price. Something has been done also in regard to the working miner. The staff of inspectors has been increased, and improved ventilation enforced. A great deal has been done also in regard to the sanatorium at Wooroloo, which we are constantly being assured is the most modern of its kind in the world, and which will provide accommodation for 300 patients. Also arrangements have been made by the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. E. Dodd) whereby the miners workers' relief fund is now practically in operation, pending only the ballot of

the miners upon the scheme. Under this scheme the workers will contribute one-third, the Chamber of Mines or the mining companies one-third, and the Government one-third, and it will be possible to raise £25,000 a year, which will be of great assistance in helping those poor fellows who have had their health broken whilst engaged in our foremost industry. I regret that we will be unable, during this session, to deal with the Mines Regulation Bill. It is true that this measure was brought forward twice during the sessions of last Parliament, but it was thrown out in another place by gentlemen, not one of whom had any knowledge of mining conditions. That measure provided for workmen's inspectors just as obtains in coal mines at the present time. It provided for the abolition of the night shift, and I appeal to members of the Country party to assist us when this Bill is again presented, which I believe will be next session, to place it on the statute-book. The abolition of the night shift would mean that the miners engaged in the hot climate of the goldfields would be able to obtain a decent night's rest. Those acquainted with the industry know that unless miners possess specially constructed cellars in their homes, and few of them do, it is impossible for them to get proper rest, and even those living under the most favourable conditions secure very poor rest during the hot months. This accounts for their health being undermined to an extent which makes them more susceptible than they otherwise would be to the fell disease of miners' phthisis. The Mines Regulation Bill will also contain a provision for limiting the height of stopes. Such a provision would make it possible for miners to be in constant touch with the backs of stopes—the ground immediately above them—and enable them to tell whether it was safe. Another probable provision will be one which was included in the previous Bill dealing with the limitation of the employment of foreigners. While on this question, let me remind members of the Opposition of the cry raised when this

proposal was previously under discussion. We were told that the provision was inhuman, and that the foreigners working on the mines would fight for the British Empire if the need for it arose. At that time we little dreamed that the wheel of fortune would bring a war on the Empire, and that these very men who have been given preference in the mines in many instances—and I say that without fear of contradiction—would now be enemies of our country. We are at present spending some of our gold to assist the Old Country to fight some of the very people whom we have been fostering by employment. The hon. member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom), who held a commission in the British Army, and is now an officer in the Australain forces, drew a vivid picture of these men, in the event of war, coming out of the stopes and marching to the coast to enlist in the service of the Empire. We have had our experience of this, and at present our chief tourist resort is being devoted solely to the occupation and amusement of these enemies of our country. I have nothing to say against the foreigner who is loyal to Australia. Germans have made as good citizens of Australia, in many instances, as is possible for descendants of the British race to be. It is to be deplored that a great war of this kind should have happened in the twentieth century, but seeing that it has occurred, it is to be hoped that the patriotism displayed by the workers towards the Empire will be shared by the mine managers on the Golden Mile and by the Chamber of Mines, and that in future preference will be given to Britishers. One matter which is not mentioned in the Governor's Speech, but which I am assured will be brought forward this session, is the Esperance Railway Bill. In regard to this measure, I view the advent of the Country party into politics with a certain amount of gratification. If there is any reason which can be advanced in favour of the entry of the Country party into politics, it is that their members stand for decentralisation. They recognise, as we on

the fields have recognised in the past; that a policy of decentralisation is essential to the prosperity of an immense State like Western Australia. The outside districts should be exploited, and, recognising this as the Country party and as I do, I will watch the attitude of their members with equanimity and satisfaction when the Esperance Railway Bill is brought forward. This measure was introduced on five occasions during the life of the last Parliament, and it met its fate in the Upper House by a very small majority. I trust that the members of the Country party will not be like a certain gentleman whose actions speak louder than words, and who, if he voted for the measure on the next occasion, would at least be able to claim that he had been consistent because he has voted both for and against the proposal. I trust that the members of the Country party in another place will follow the lead which I suspect will be taken by their members in this House, and that they will support the Esperance Northwards Railway Bill, which will open up a vast area of country in the eastern part of the State.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Good agricultural country, too.

Mr. GREEN: I cannot close my remarks without offering you, Sir, my congratulations upon your re-election to the high office of Speaker. I feel, in the words uttered with the greatest sincerity by the leader of the Opposition, that you have on all occasions fearlessly and conscientiously done your duty towards the members of this House, and I compliment you upon again attaining that position. I wish to thank hon. members for their indulgence on a day which is regarded largely as a holiday so far as this Chamber is concerned, and for their patient hearing.

On motion by Hon. Frank Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.38 p.m.
