

MR. THOMAS: Adjourn for six months!

THE PREMIER: If we meet on Thursday and the Ministry is then formed, we shall have an opportunity of accommodating our friends on the Opposition side as far as we possibly can in connection with any farther adjournment which may be required.

MR. DAGLISH: What about the presentation of the Address-in-Reply?

THE PREMIER: That can be done in the meantime.

MR. MORAN: The Speaker will want to know.

THE PREMIER: I think it should be dealt with by the Premier for the time being.

MR. MORAN: No; the Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The Address must be presented by the Speaker, accompanied by hon. members.

THE PREMIER: We cannot do it to-morrow. I think the proper thing now is to adjourn, so that I can get constitutional advice from his Excellency. I beg to move that the House at its rising do adjourn until Thursday next, at half-past three o'clock.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at seven minutes past 1 o'clock a.m., until the next Thursday.

## Legislative Council, Wednesday, 10th August, 1904.

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

PRAYERS.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by HON. G. RANDELL, leave of absence for two months granted to the HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE, on the ground of urgent private business.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### SIXTH DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous day.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West): I have an opportunity to offer my congratulations to the Government on the great advance which has been made during the last three years. It is very gratifying to notice that settlement of the land has increased to such an enormous extent. Yesterday in speaking, the Hon. C. A. Piesse said the Government had done very little to encourage this settlement on the land.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: I rise to a point of order. I did not say that.

HON. E. McLARTY: I understood the hon. member to say the Government had not done much to encourage it, at all events; and I take the figures that have been adduced in this Speech, which speak for themselves. During the last three years settlement has increased by about 9,000 holdings—that is very satisfactory—whilst the acreage has also increased by about a million and a-quarter, and the wheat yield has increased to more than double what it was. I do not think it necessary for the Government to take any very great measures to put people on the land, for people are running after it in all directions, and I think that the rate at which the State is being settled at the present time is quite satisfactory. We hear a great deal about the splendid markets and inducements for people to go on the land, but as I am engaged in that occupation myself I have some knowledge of this matter, and I am sorry to say that such is not my experience. I have recently been sending oats into the market to get the best price to be obtained by public auction, and have forwarded stuff to Perth and Fremantle. My experience is that the stuff has not anything like paid the cost of production. The same applies to fruit at the present time. Oranges have been sold at sixpence per dozen. I know fruit-growers who assure me it does not pay them at the present time to take oranges and send them into the market. Therefore, I must say my opinion is that there is a bit too much made of this land question. Another matter in connection with land settlement which I do not approve of is that fad of huddling the people together on the land. It appears to me to be part of the platform of the

Labour party to break up what they term large estates, and to settle a large number of people on the land. I am perfectly satisfied Western Australia is not adapted for this class of settlement; and I see every day, as I travel about the country, that people who have gone on the land in small holdings are ekeing out a very poor existence. I contend that it is better, in the interests of the country, to give a man sufficient land upon which he can live and rear up a family with some degree of comfort and make a comfortable living. It is far better to settle half-a-dozen people upon a piece of land so that they may be prosperous, than to put plenty of people on land who will be in poverty all their lives. I know land which has been purchased by the Government for selection, and in my opinion a good estate has been absolutely destroyed, for the holdings are not sufficient to give people the chance to make a living on them. I contend that any man who settles on land must have something more than he gets from the soil to settle down on. It is not to be supposed that if we put a man on the land, he is going to make a living out of it. No account seems to be taken of bad crops, bad markets, bad seasons, and all the difficulties that have to be contended with. I say, therefore, there must be something to supplement the living to be obtained out of the soil. A man must have room for a dairy farm and room to rear sheep. In my experience there are very few places in the State where close settlement will be a success. There are places where I believe it will be a failure. I am not aware of those large estates which are not being developed and worked. I know there are some, such as the Midland Railway Company's land, to which exception can be taken; but I can assure the Labour party that the owners of those estates will be only too pleased to open their arms to a buyer and to sell at any price. I will also tell them that they will be very bad bargains, because the soil is not rich enough for throwing the land open for small holdings. People will never be got to settle on these lands, that is people who have any practical knowledge; and I contend it is no use putting people on the land who have no knowledge and experience of the soil on

which they are entering. I know a great many people who have settled on the land, and they do not find it so soft a thing as it is represented to be. We know many people cry out that it is a very easy matter, and that it is a remedy for those out of employment to put them on the land. If a man has no means with which to start when he settles on the land, I say it would be better for him to keep off it. I wish to refer to a matter which has been discussed in another place. Some detrimental remarks have been made with regard to Collie coal, and I was surprised that the member representing that district and that industry was silent, and that he made no charge or challenge against the statement made by another member in another place. I am not going into the merits of this coal and its quality—I know very little about coal; but I think this matter has been greatly exaggerated. It is said that the country has lost £270,000 or £300,000. I think if an account were taken of the large amount of land sold, of the royalty received from the coal, of the industry that has been opened up, of the employment given, and of the population which has been induced to come to the State expressly to work that coal, the loss certainly cannot be very much. Then, again, it must be taken into consideration that, if there were no competition in the price of coal, we would be probably paying 10s. a ton more for Newcastle than the Government pay at present. That in itself is a great consideration; and I hope these reports will not be allowed to go abroad to have a detrimental effect upon the industry on which a great deal of money has already been expended, and upon a district in which a large population has already settled. It would be a disastrous thing at the present time if any check were given to the Collie coal industry. I make no apology for briefly referring to that great work, the Coolgardie Water Scheme, and for expressing my pleasure at the work being so successfully carried out under the present Government. On every occasion that this great work has been brought before the House, I have always expressed my entire confidence in the scheme, believing that it would be a work of great benefit to the State in the future. I notice it has been termed on the goldfields

as the life-blood of the great industry of the State. We know the scheme met with great opposition from members representing the goldfields in the past. We had a great many amateur engineers on the floor of the House condemning the scheme as impossible; and we had pictures of water pipes leaking and of dams bursting and towns being washed away into the sea; so that it is eminently satisfactory to know that this work has been so completely carried out, and that it is such a great boon to the Eastern Goldfields. We have very little in the way of public works to look forward to in the future, not even the Collie-Narrogin line passed last session. Believing it was the intention of the Government to go on with this work, a great many people have been induced to take up land along the route, and it certainly would be unjust to these people if the work did not go on. There are other railways I hope we shall hear of before the House is long in session. The Government have recently taken over a timber line in the Busselton district. I understand they have relaid it with sleepers and put it in good order. That line, like others built in the early days, leads to nowhere; and I hope the Government will see their way clear to extend it for 12 miles to tap the Blackwood country where there are very many settlers and where probably a great many will settle—a class of people we want to settle there, in country which is suitable for the production of potatoes and such kind of crops, and also for dairying. I think it is very unwise if the Government intend to work this line from the South-Western Railway to St. John's Brook. It would be wiser to extend it for ten miles to give the settlers on the Blackwood the advantage that other settlers enjoy in the State. Another work I hope to see introduced is the extension southward of the Donnybrook-Bridgetown Railway. It has been talked of for years, and I hope some survey will be made to show if it is justifiable to extend the railway farther south. I hope we shall get such a favourable report from the far northern country about Nullagine and Marble Bar to justify something being done in that portion of the State. My impression is that nothing will give a greater impetus to agriculture and production in this State than the

opening up of that country by a railway. If it is true, as is reported and as I believe it is, that this country is rich in minerals, no doubt after railway communication is established a large population will settle there. It is not a producing part of the country, and the people would be dependent upon the South for the whole of their supplies, while there would be an outlet for Collie coal because, I understand, there is no timber for miles. It is utterly impossible for that country to ever be developed without railway communication. I hope we shall get so favourable a report that the Government will see their way to act. As that railway will have no connection with any other Government line, it might well be undertaken by private enterprise. I hope capitalists will be found to undertake it, though I understand there will be considerable difficulty in getting anyone to build a railway from the coast to the Nullagine Goldfield. I congratulate the Government on their having extended so widely educational facilities, and on the fact that technical education is receiving at least some attention. As one who has had several sons to educate, I have felt much grieved on this subject. We send our boys to school when they are very young, and they grow up almost to manhood before their education is finished and they turn out to be practically useful. When they leave school, although they have had advantages which the earlier settlers in the State did not perhaps enjoy, and have obtained a fairly good education, they know little about the industries in which they are to engage. They return home knowing scarcely anything about the work they are called upon to perform. Great attention should be paid to technical education. It is a splendid thing. We know that when boys leave school they have their living to make, and that they can learn how to make it while receiving their school education. I desire to say a word or two in reference to the James Government—I suppose I must say the late Government. I am sure that the intimation of the James Government having gone out of power will be received with much regret by settlers in this State. I have heard it said that the country is tired of the James Government and wants a change.

I have recently travelled a good deal through the country on an electioneering tour, and I have found wherever I went nothing but good said of the James Government. I addressed numerous meetings in the centres throughout my large province; wherever I announced myself a supporter of and a believer in the James Government I was always received with the loudest acclamation; and I think the record we have in this Speech of their past work will certainly do them credit in years to come. Of the large Mines Department we hear no complaints from the mining districts. Everything seems satisfactory, and mining men give great credit to the Minister who has so ably presided over that department. As to the Minister for Lands, I find that throughout the agricultural districts he is in the greatest favour. It is fully recognised that he has striven his best to bring about a better state of things. The work of the Lands Office, it is well known, was much behindhand when the Minister took control, and he has now brought it pretty well up to date; at all events, things are much better than when he assumed that position. He has been a highly energetic Minister; he has travelled through the country trying to make himself acquainted with its requirements. It is not to be expected that everyone will be pleased with everything done in his constituency by so large a department as the Lands; but I think, taking the work of the department generally, it has been fairly satisfactory. There may have been mistakes, and I suppose there always will be; but it is recognised, at all events throughout the agricultural districts, that Mr. Hopkins has been a most energetic Minister, and has done his very best according to his judgment to push on land settlement. Without speaking personally of all the Ministers I think my remarks apply all round; and I am surely expressing the feelings of every member when I say that we all regret that we are losing as leader of this House so able and so courteous a gentleman as the Minister (Hon. W. Kingsmill) who has so long occupied that position. I think we all recognise the ability with which he has discharged his duties in this House; we all acknowledge the great courtesy he has shown to members; and I am sure he

has on many occasions displayed much patience and forbearance. Personally, I much regret that we are losing Mr. Kingsmill as our leader; and I believe this expression of regret will be shared by every member in this Chamber. I do not wish to foster any strong feeling against the new Government coming into power. I believe it will be the desire of members here to deal out the same justice and fair play to the Labour Government as we have dealt to Governments in the past; and I for one will always be ready to give the most careful consideration, such as I am sure every other member will give, to any measures brought before us. And I hope the new Government, while doing their best for the State, will not be led into the great error of trying to benefit one class of the community at the expense of another. I am not afraid that this will be done; and I trust the same consideration will be shown to the Labour Government who will come into power as was shown to Governments in the past. We know that we are threatened to-day with fresh taxation; but that matter can be dealt with when the time comes. A proposal to tax the land is very agreeable at any public meeting; it always takes well to tell the people that taxation is to be imposed to burst up large estates, and for other purposes. That is always received with great acclamation in the towns, and by people who know very little of the position. I think, when we come to investigate the matter, we shall find not so much ground for complaint as many people now imagine. I find landowners doing all that their means will allow; in fact, a great many are spending more on their lands than they are actually getting out of them. I know that is my position. Although I hold a fairly good block of land, I spend more every year in wages and development—twice or three times more—than that land returns me; and I see the same being done by other landowners. And unless a man has some other means than his land revenue, he cannot travel too fast. If he be depending on what he gets from his land he must go slowly; and that is what many people do not understand. They think everything ought to be done at once; they know little of the expenses and the dis-appointments with which settlers have

to contend. When this matter comes before the House I shall have something to say on it, because I know the real difficulties of land settlement; and I know there is a good deal of land in this State, especially along the seaboard, that is not capable of improvement. It is no use saying that a man holds 1,000 acres, 5,000 acres, or 10,000 acres which he should have under cultivation; because every practical man knows that if he breaks up that land he will simply have a sandplain; that he cannot improve either the grazing capacity or any other quality of that class of country. This does not apply to the inland country, where the more one clears and ploughs and generally develops, the better return one gets. I hope this matter will be looked into, and that the people will not be unduly taxed on the ground that they are holding land without developing it, when in its present condition that land is utterly incapable of improvement. I have pleasure in supporting the Address-in-reply, and I again join in expressing my regret that we are losing Mr. Kingsmill as leader of this House.

Hon. S. J. HAYNES (South-West): I have to thank hon. members and the leader of this House for the opportunity of saying a few words on the Address-in-reply. My colleagues and myself were unfortunately prevented from being in our places by reason of the elements, and the damage done by washaways on the railway. I thank the House and Mr. Kingsmill for the opportunity of speaking. I also want to take this opportunity of congratulating the mover and seconder of the Address-in-reply for the long, able, and interesting addresses they gave us. His Excellency's Speech—owing undoubtedly to the political situation in another place—deals rather in generalities than in detail; it deals on broad lines; and from what I can judge of the Speech, I give my general adherence to the matters therein set forth, but certainly with some exceptions. I congratulate both the State and the Government on the satisfactory position of our great industries, the mining, agricultural and pastoral. The tone of the Speech is pleasing, and I am satisfied, in common with my fellow-members, that the remarks are justified. In addition I think the future prospects, the potentialities and

possibilities of our industries very great indeed; and I think all we require to enable this State and the great industries to progress, even more rapidly than our abnormal progression in the past, is good, stable, wise government and administration. If we have this, the State of Western Australia will be one of the leading States in this important Commonwealth. We meet on this occasion in a handsome building—undoubtedly it is a very handsome one; but I for one thought when new Parliament Houses were first mooted and it was a question of building them, that the work might be postponed for some time, and the money which has been expended on this handsome building might have been spent on works that would, at the present juncture, be better for the welfare of the State. At any rate we have got the building and handsome surroundings; and possibly, as members have stated, it may have the effect of causing members to think seriously and solemnly of the important duties they have to perform in this place. I think in the old Council Chamber members throughout gave their very best attention to matters appertaining to the well-being of the State, and I think those premises would have suited our purposes for some years to come. We have a building and surroundings that any State might well be proud of. In his Excellency's Speech reference is made to immigration, and I think if any mode could be found for increasing our population it should be adopted. We certainly do want population; at the same time we want population of the right type; we want if possible to get those who will go on to our lands rather than stay about our towns; we want producers rather than nonproducers. I am satisfied there is plenty of scope, and a greater scope in Western Australia than in any of the other States, to absorb population. What mode should be adopted to encourage men of the right stamp is a matter for consideration. One of the best methods would be, I think, that of cheapening or issuing free passes from the old country to competent farmers and men of that class to come out; because that class seem to drift to Canada and America. The only reason that they do so is because of the shortness of the distance

and the smallness of the expense in getting to those countries, whereas if a man wishes to come to Australia from the old country it is a very heavy expense indeed. If any legislation is brought forward which will attract immigrants of the right type, it will have my hearty support. Another matter mentioned in his Excellency's Speech—and it has been mentioned in Speeches for several sessions—is the franchise for the Council. So far as the franchise is concerned, I think the present one quite liberal enough; and if we commence tinkering with that franchise, where are we to end? If we go cutting it down time after time, we shall be absolutely altering the character of this House. People must produce some political cries, and one of the most popular cries is, popularise the Upper House. At the present time the House is, in my opinion, popular enough. At any rate it is popular with those who represent the greatest proportion of industry and thrift in this State. I hope the House will seriously consider the effect of a reduction of and the continual tinkering with the franchise, should an appeal for the reduction of the franchise be laid before us. I see no necessity for it, and there has been no outcry for it. I am sure it is not required. As it is at present, we find that even those on the roll now with the £25 franchise hardly attend to the duties as well as they should. Perhaps it may be said they are perfectly satisfied with the representatives they have, who serve them well. But at any rate they do not roll up to the poll as well and sufficiently as I should like. Another matter referred to in the Speech is the establishment of State hotels. One has been established. So far as State hotels are concerned I am dead against them, and I do not think the State should touch them. I am dead against the State control of industries generally. I am a true believer in private enterprise. I agree with what I think is common sense, and I object to fads. It seems to me that what we have to contend against is what I may term a wave of socialism which is running not only through Western Australia—it is, to a certain extent—but through the other States. To my mind the great curse to this State, and also to Australia, consists of two things, one being manhood suffrage, and the other

payment of members. I may be charged with conservatism in saying that, but I believe that those two things have been detrimental to Australia. So far as socialism is concerned—I cannot help mentioning it because it seems to be in the air—I do not think we should deal with it as a harmless bogie. It seems to me to be coming on too fast to be considered in that light, and it must be met seriously. The old issues that we used to deal with have undoubtedly died away, and at the present time there are apparently two issues. One party claims a fair field for labour and capital—that is what I wish personally—and there are those who believe in confiscating capital by taxation, and in the State control of all industries. Some of those advocating socialism are undoubtedly bent on plunder. There is no doubt about that. These men have nothing to lose, and they have never been thrifty. They simply want to exploit the thrift of others; to plunder them. This wave of socialism which is coming over us is due to what I may term the undue adulation of the workers, as if manual labour counted for everything. I say it does not. So far as the workers generally are concerned, I have as much sympathy with them and will do as much for them as some of those who advocate these measures. I have every sympathy with them, but I think they should only require fair play. I will not give undue adulation to the workers, nor would I do the other thing. Why should the landowner, the capitalist, or the employer be disregarded? By carrying out this so-called socialism the worker himself would, to my mind, be simply hoist with his own petard. Directly he gets a block of land he is a landowner; directly he puts a few pounds into the Savings Bank and gets interest, he has capital; and directly he takes a share in a co-operative society, he is an employer. If the theories of this socialistic wave were translated into practice, the manual worker would, I am sure, be the very first to feel the effect. We have an example at the present time in the Eastern States. Look at New South Wales and the employment of State labour. At present they do not know how to make ends meet. We cannot shut our eyes to these facts. If we give way to socialistic fads, we

shall do injury to the very persons whose position those advocating socialism desire to improve. I give them credit in some instances for having that desire, which I know some entertain. I have always felt strongly on this subject, and I really think the views I have expressed are sound views. At any rate they are honest. My honourable colleague, in speaking the other day, drew attention to the fact that certain railways were not mentioned in the Speech. Allusion was made to the Donnybrook-Bridgetown extension railway and the Collic-Narrogin railway. I can understand why they were not mentioned, the reason being the unsettled state of matters in another place. Another railway, too, to which I would draw the attention of the House, and which may come before them perhaps in the near future, is a line from Canning to Kojonup. [HON. W. MALEY: I mentioned it]. I do not wish to be charged with parochialism regarding these railways. Some of them run in the province I represent, and some do not. But what I say so far as these railways are concerned is, let the Government look into them, and if the railways are wanted, give them; if not, refuse them. [MEMBER: What about the money?] If you cannot get the money, you cannot get the railways; you cannot do impossibilities. Although we see Mr. Kingsmill here in his place, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that changes are about to take place; but this House has nothing to do with the change of Ministries; we have not to deal with men but purely with measures. At the same time I join heartily with what has fallen from the Hon. E. McLarty with respect to the James Ministry. Taken as a whole, they have worked industriously and hard. They have put democratic measures on the statute book, some of them indeed being too democratic for me. I give them the greatest credit for their administration. They have administered the affairs of this State in a way which will be a credit to the James Government when they cease to exist; and in particular they have put the finances of this State into a business-like condition, and into such a state as they were never in before. At the present time the figures are issued in such a form that one who has only a small knowledge of figures can follow them.

That is a great improvement on what has been the case in the past, and it will facilitate very much the work of any subsequent Treasurer. I do not want to individualise any Minister, but I assert that, taking the Ministry as a whole, they have worked hard to administer the departments well, and all I can hope is that when there is a change of Ministry the new Ministry will work as hard and as industriously, and be actuated by the same motive as prompted the James Government, that being the welfare of this important State. However, as I mentioned, we are not dealing with Ministries or men; we have to deal with measures, and so far as I am personally concerned, if my health and capacity to represent the South-East Province continue, I will in my place always resist any measures that come before this House which will work injustice, whether against labour or against capital, and I will always, to the best of my ability, do what I can to promote and support measures which tend to the general welfare of this State, and not any particular class. I have only been able, by reason of the situation of political matters, to deal generally with the Speech; but our adoption of the Address in this House seems to be a formal matter from the wording of it, and I have therefore much pleasure in joining with other members in supporting the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): As one of the oldest members in the House, a few words may be expected from me on the Governor's Speech; but I think it is quite superfluous and unnecessary to enter into all the details in it. I regret extremely the course the Ministers have taken. We all feel with the Colonial Secretary.

THE PRESIDENT: I must draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that no official notification has been given to this House of any change of Government. In all probability we shall know something of it to-morrow.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: In that case we need say nothing more about it at present; but in all probability the James Government will be out of office, and I can only say that to a great extent the Government have brought about their own defeat. At the same time I

consider they deserve credit for the way in which they have administered those public works of the State which were in an unfinished condition some years ago. When in the future I look towards the seat now occupied by the representative of the Government in this House, I shall do so with regret, for I shall regret the hon. gentleman's absence from that chair. During the time he has been in the House he has dealt with matters in a tactful way, and has introduced measures into this House in a statesmanlike manner. He has created a very friendly feeling towards him in this House. Everyone admits it; and although he may be away from his seat for a little time, I hope that in the near future he will take his place there again. A great deal might be said on the details in his Excellency's Speech. It offers congratulations to the country on the business of the State being in a satisfactory condition. It is satisfactory to know that the revenue is steadily increasing and that the population is steadily increasing, and to know that we can look forward to matters continuing to improve. At the same time I think there is one shadow which we cannot get from under, that is the bad results continually brought about by our connection with the Commonwealth Government. This is a matter I hope yet to see the State relieved of. Nothing would please me better than to see every man in the State sign a requisition to the Home Government asking them to release us from the Federal Union. A large proportion of the people of the State were never in favour of Federation, and it seems to me to be most unsatisfactory to be forced into a position of this kind. It simply means nothing more than giving away the whole of the State to the other States. We can look at it as we like, but we can see that the expenses of the Government are doubled, nay trebled, and five times increased to what they were under former circumstances. Federation is of no earthly use to this State. There is nothing reproductive in it, nothing to the substantial advancement of the State in any way. A double-barrelled system of government will never do any good. There is no good spirit between this State and the others. All the other States want is to get as

much revenue as they can out of this portion of the Commonwealth. They are doing it, and they will continue doing it. Nothing will please me better than to see a determined step on the part of the people of Western Australia to appeal to the home Government stating that we have federated against our own views and feelings. There is not the slightest doubt that the principal part of the permanent residents of the State were all opposed to the union.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The majority was two and a half.

HON. C. E. DEMSTER: But we know what the majority was composed of—not of residents of the State, but of people who had no right to vote. It would be the same thing again if matters of this kind were referred to a referendum, especially in regard to the existence of this House. I hope the country will always see how absolutely necessary it will be to maintain this House in its present position and not to allow any interference with regard to our franchise. It is within the power of everybody who wishes to advance to have a vote for the Legislative Council by acquiring the franchise. It is bad sense on the part of any member to advocate a reduction in the franchise. I shall, at all events, stand firm in regard to this. A good deal is said in the Speech regarding the condition of our industries. The agricultural industry has certainly made satisfactory progress; but I maintain that it is not altogether desirable to settle people on the soil unless they are within reasonable distance of the railway, and have a good rainfall and the means of purchasing stock and agricultural machinery; because to settle a large number of people on outside locations in localities that are not perhaps too good and where the soil does not produce too well, would be extremely unwise, and I think the Government are doing a little too much in their desire to settle people on the land. The time is approaching when produce of every kind in the State will be brought down to the lowest possible ebb, to prices that will be so low that none but those who can produce by the strictest economy and attention to expenses will be able to carry on. We have arrived at a stage of production when we can supply all our own requirements without importing, and we must soon export. The prices



for exported produce are not such as will lead to much increase of produce that may be exported. It is well to show that in settling people on the soil no land will pay to cultivate except that in the vicinity of a railway and possessing other advantages. I forgot to allude to the congratulations on the construction of this magnificent building. I, like other members, would have been willing to see the cost of construction of this building deferred over to some future time. I think we might very well have entered into this expense two or three years later on ; but at the same time there is not the slightest doubt it would have been entered into the future, and it is as well to do the work properly in the first instance rather than do it half-way. The country may well be congratulated, therefore, in having Houses of Parliament that will compare with anything in Australasia—at any rate with anything I have seen. I think the work upon which we can cast our eyes in the Chamber shows that the architect, the contractors, and workmen deserve a great deal of credit. I am not an architect, but this magnificent ceiling and the whole of the woodwork in the Chamber reflect the very greatest credit on the workmen.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT: What about the high gallery?

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: It may be high, but it certainly looks grand. I shall not make a long speech, because I think it is unnecessary. When we again meet here we shall have another policy before us. Perhaps the incoming Government will be too proud to accept the policy of the outgoing Government ; but I must say that to see the present Government going out in the way they are doing is a source of deep regret to myself, and I wish it had been otherwise. However, I hope those who may succeed them will at all times see how necessary it is to cultivate goodwill between all classes of our community, and that they will do to others as they would be done by.

THE PRESIDENT: I must again call the hon. member's attention to the fact that there is no official notification to this House that there has been any change of Ministry. No doubt we shall hear about it to-morrow.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I do not need to say any more in that respect ; but I sincerely hope that when we meet at some future time, affairs will bear a more satisfactory aspect than they do at present. I beg to support the Address-in-reply.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill): May I be permitted to say that my position on this occasion is rendered more difficult and more delicate than it usually is, because, although I bow to the President's ruling that we have no official notification of any change of Government, still there are so many definite rumours in the Press to-day, that I feel some apprehension something of the sort may take place. These rumours I have no doubt are well founded ones, and we shall understand, I am sure, that while they are uncontradicted my position is a difficult and delicate one, for the practical reason that I am speaking as it were in a state of transition. We have no official notification of a change of Government, which accounts for the fact that I am not called to order for speaking out of my place. This would not be my place to-day were I officially informed of the name of the gentleman who is to take my place. However, I presume to-morrow I shall be speaking from a different part of the House. Members will understand that, speaking in this state of transition, it is of little interest to this Chamber for me to discuss the terms of a Governor's Speech which has interested me as a Minister, and which it was my duty as Minister to explain to this Chamber. While I have not yet become a private member, it is difficult for me to criticise the Governor's Speech (a Speech which I understand has been amended in another place) with that frame of mind and that confidence which have been displayed in many instances by members in this House who have spoken. That, I think, will account for the fact that I do not desire on this occasion to speak at any great length. I should like, however, in the first place to acknowledge the generally appreciative tone of the remarks of members, and to render thanks on behalf of the Government of which I have or had the honour to be a member, to those who have so kindly eulogised the Ministry, to those who have

recognised what I think the Government may claim, a desire to honestly, conscientiously, and to the utmost of our power and ability serve this State. And I should like, especially in this connection, to thank Mr. Randell for the very kindly remarks he made; remarks which carry much weight, coming as they do from a gentleman who has occupied high positions in this State; who has been so long an important factor in the social and political life of Western Australia. I feel that praise from that gentleman is praise indeed. Of course, we cannot expect that a debate of this sort will be all sugar; and amongst the speeches delivered, there have, as usual, been some hostile criticisms. This is what may be expected; and perhaps I shall be pardoned in my amphibious sort of capacity if I make a few remarks in answer to some of those criticisms. I should like first of all to refer to some remarks about the last election. Mr. Drew took strong exception to the system of postal voting initiated in this State by the Electoral Act of last session. I do not deny there is a good deal of truth in what not only Mr. Drew but other members said about postal voting. I think that the Government, in their anxiety to render voting easy of accomplishment by all the electors of the State, have perhaps omitted from the Act some of the conditions which act as safeguards to postal voting. The procedure in the case of postal voting I think altogether too easy. If members will compare the system of postal voting in this State with those provided say in the Commonwealth and South Australian Electoral Acts, they will find that one very important provision in those Acts has been omitted here, and omitted only for the reason which I have stated—the Government were anxious that every elector should have an opportunity of recording his vote at the elections. By the Commonwealth and South Australian Acts it is not competent for any voter who wishes to record a postal vote to go direct to the person appointed to take such votes and so to record his vote. On the contrary, the voter must first obtain from the returning officer of the district for which he wishes to vote permission on a form given in the schedule of the Act to record that postal vote. The returning officer has thus an oppor-

tunity of finding out whether the prospective voter is a fit and proper person to vote, and whether the reasons given by the voter for his wishing to record a vote—which reasons he must give in writing—justify his recording a postal rather than a personal vote.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Why were not the Commonwealth provisions included?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The reason was that the Government did not wish to throw any obstruction in the way of prospective voters. It was thought that the necessity for obtaining permission in the form of a certificate of the fitness of the man registering a postal vote might possibly act detrimentally to his chance of voting; and it was for that reason alone that the omission was made. However, I think I am justified in saying that the events which transpired during the recent elections have shown that the system of postal voting has been over-used, and that it would have been well had the restrictions referred to been embodied in our legislation. Mr. Drew also referred to certain appointments of persons to take postal votes. I should be glad, if the hon. member were here, to give him all the information he required about this matter, because it happens to come within my own jurisdiction; and I may say at once that in appointing persons to take postal votes I was actuated by one motive—to make the poll of Western Australia as complete as possible. In all cases where information could be obtained I took care that those appointed were as far as possible responsible persons; and in cases where it was pointed out to me that any of those persons were partisans—and there are members in this House who can bear me out in this—the names of those persons were at once struck off the roll of those appointed to take postal votes. But where an hon. member or any other member of the community sits down under an injustice, as Mr. Drew appears to have done, makes no complaint, says nothing about it, does not report the circumstance, how, I would ask this House in all fairness, is the Minister controlling the department to arrive at the conclusion which Mr. Drew appears to have thought that the Minister ought to have arrived at spontaneously? I maintain that the hon.

member in the case he mentions neglected a very obvious duty; and I can also assure him—and I think other hon. members can assure him—that had it been pointed out to me that any person appointed to take postal votes was misusing his position, was a partisan of one of the candidates, that person's name would at once have been removed from the list. During the course of the election we have had a good deal of complaint about the rolls; and I think members will admit that with the limited time at our disposal to prepare the rolls for the whole State, it was scarcely to be expected that the rolls would be perfect. That they were very imperfect I am fully prepared to admit; but I should like to inform members that the Government have taken the first opportunity of setting to work to rectify those rolls. In all populous centres—and, after all, it is in the populous centres that the bulk of the mistakes on the rolls occur, and where the duplication of names on the rolls and other faults of that sort are likely to have disastrous results—in all populous centres a house-to-house canvass with the idea of clearing up the rolls as far as possible has already been initiated, and in some cases completed; and it is hoped, with the information which will now be at the disposal of the department, that the rolls, should there be an election at any time in the near future, will be far more satisfactory than they were at the recent election. But I should like to point out that it is in these very populous electorates that this system of house-to-house canvass breaks down. We have in Western Australia a very large number of adults who, if I may use the expression, are without homes. Take for instance Perth, Fremantle, and Kalgoorlie. What a large percentage of the population do we find consisting of men who are living not in homes of their own, who have a fleeting abode in boarding-houses; and it is the boarding-houses which are the despair of those who have charge of the rolls of this State. Of course we must also blame for this position of affairs the reluctance of the average voter to help those who have charge of the rolls. It is very difficult to persuade a man that when he shifts say from one district to another, he should not register a new claim, but should register a transfer.

There at once, unless we have a perfect system, and I think I may say an almost unattainable system of checking the rolls one with the other—a task very much heavier than most members believe—unless we have that system we at once get duplications which destroy the efficiency of our rolls. I make these few remarks to point out in the first place what difficulties we had in compiling the electoral rolls, and secondly the steps we are taking to overcome these difficulties. I was glad that the circumstances permitted us to adjourn the House from day to day until yesterday; because in the Address-in-reply debate there invariably goes up from Mr. Piesse a sort of desperate wail about the administration of the Lands Department. This is, so far as I can see, an annual occurrence. I suppose it always will be an annual occurrence. I cannot possibly imagine any possible administration of the Lands Department which would suit the hon. member, unless perhaps he took it in hand himself; and even then, I believe his sense of fairness is so overwhelming that he would rise to object to what he himself was doing. I think the weight of evidence is against the statements of the hon. member. He has always shown what I consider a certain lack of appreciation of the efforts of Mr. Hopkins.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Not always.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:

Well, some of those efforts have met with not only a lack of appreciation, but with abundance of depreciation. The hon. member objects strongly to some of the legislation of the Government, and still more to some of their administration. I find that other members join with him in affirming that there is absolutely no necessity in most instances to encourage the small settler; and I am sorry to hear members, simultaneously with the declaration that we must not break up large estates, say that very much of our land is unfit for closer settlement. That is indeed discouraging; and it is the more discouraging because we find as the years go on, a greater and greater tendency for immigration to set in to this State.

HON. E. McLARTY: It is nevertheless a fact.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am sorry to hear it; but I do not think it is so much a matter of fact as a

matter of opinion. May I be permitted to hope, even in the face of Mr. McLarty and Mr. Piesse, that the opinions they have formed of this country may prove in after years to be not altogether correct? I say it is a great pity; because circumstances show every day that the tendency of people to come to Western Australia grows greater and greater; and it may be news to members present to learn that within the last few weeks I have had several applications, which have been favourably considered, for assisted immigration to Western Australia from Canada. People will even come here, and come here direct, not casually, from Chili. There are two families in Chili who, I believe, have found land to their liking in Western Australia, and are about to settle here; so members will perceive that the fame of this country is being noised abroad, and this I believe is largely due to the efforts of Mr. Hopkins. Undoubtedly he has shown great energy in his administration of the department; and I again hope that the doleful prophecies of Mr. Piesse and Mr. McLarty will not be realised.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: I rise to a point of order. I made no doleful prophecies. I ran down his administration; and I have not altered my opinion of it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I must apologise to the hon. member. I have evidently made a mistake and heard him imperfectly. There is another question which Mr. Piesse touched upon, and which I think he touches upon every year, that is the lack of medical attendance in farming districts. If members will compare the medical facilities given in Western Australia with those of other countries, they will find that we spend a much larger sum per annum in providing medical attendance and medical comforts in Western Australia than is provided in any other part of Australia. The principal difficulty is that the State is so large. If the hon. member will admit that, he will admit that we have a huge area to administer, and with all respect to his opinion, he cannot expect that a medical man can be attached to the family of every farmer. We are doing the best we possibly can, and I venture to say we are doing a fair thing indeed for the agricultural settlers in providing them with medical attendance. As it

appears to be likely that the place of the James Government will be taken by another Government at some not far distant period, perhaps I may be pardoned now I am speaking almost as a private member, for expressing some solicitude for some matters which have given me a great deal of thought and have caused me a good deal of anxiety during the time I have been a Minister. Some of the schemes have been initiated by myself, some are almost accomplished; and I hope whoever takes the place of the James Government will treat the schemes kindly, and not retard their progress but rather push them on to a successful conclusion. The first thing I would like to refer to is a subject dealt with in his Excellency's Speech, that of the Fremantle Harbour and the Fremantle Harbour Trust. I think I may be pardoned for taking a keen interest in this work, as it has occupied my attention for the last two and a-half years, first as a Minister who helped to draft and introduce the Bill which was passed through Parliament making that Harbour Trust an accomplished fact, and afterwards as the Minister who had to administer the affairs of the Harbour Trust. In this connection I would like to place on record the generous assistance which has been rendered day by day by the hon. gentleman who holds a seat in this House—I refer to Capt. Laurie. There was a great deal of trouble when the appointment was made, and I think I am justified in saying that the results achieved by the Harbour Trust under the chairmanship of Capt. Laurie have amply and more than justified the appointment the Government then made. In mentioning the name of Capt. Laurie I do not wish to cast any reflection, but I would like to include the names of the other commissioners. There is a great deal to do yet in connection with the Fremantle harbour and the powers and duties of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. The Fremantle harbour sometimes shows signs of being too small for the trade it has to cope with. There are two ways of enlarging a harbour, first by actually enlarging the area of the harbour in providing greater wharf accommodation and doing more dredging and extending the limits of the harbour. That is most expensive and

dangerous. The better way is to provide such facilities for the discharging and unloading of vessels that come to the harbour as will enable them to discharge and load cargo and use the harbour for a lesser space of time, and so increase the effective size of the harbour for the purposes of trade. I hope whatever Government comes into power, this will form one of the principal ideals they have to attain. What is more important I contend than a great deal of the legislation which we pass is the question of administration and material prosperity of the State, a question of providing for the shipping and ship-masters and passengers, so that they may have a good word to say when they go on their way to other parts of the world. I trust that this work will not be neglected by the successors of the James Government, whoever they may be. There is another question in which I have taken a great deal of interest while in office, and that is provision for the accommodation of the insane in our community. We have made a very good start in the new hospital for the insane at Claremont. There are about 100 patients there, and we are doing good work towards the making of an asylum which will be on the most modern lines in Australia and a credit to the State. I hope the new Government coming in will not fail to take up the work where it now stands, and will push on with it so as to replace that old building at Fremantle, which has been a blot on Western Australia for so many years. I hope the new Government will carry on the work on plans the present Government have provided and which will not be at all too large for the country, because I am much afraid, judging by the rate at which lunacy is increasing amongst the community—and in saying this I do not wish to infer that our percentage of unatics is higher than elsewhere, indeed it is much lower, but is quickly approaching the normal—and I fear very much by the time the hospital for the insane is finished there will be enough unatics in Western Australia to fill it. Again there is another matter which has come under my department and with which we have made more or less of a start, that is the provision of an Old Men's home at Claremont to take the place of the one which now exists on Mount

Bay road. As members know, that place is very much overcrowded, and tenders are now being called for the erection of a home between Point Resolution and Torbay. The surroundings there will be more pleasant than those connected with the building now occupied by the old men, and will be better in some other respects. The surroundings may not appear so pleasant to the old men, because the unfortunate old chaps will have to go farther whenever they wish to reach the nearest public-house; but the surroundings will materially add to the effectiveness of the home for these old men, and be infinitely more healthy. And there is another matter about which not much has been said, but I hope it will not be forgotten by the incoming Government—this has long been part of a scheme of health in other countries—provision in this State of a sanatorium for the treatment and cure of consumptives. I hope members will pardon me for referring to these somewhat minor details; but they have had great interest to me for some time past, and I hope now in my capacity of a quasi private member to impress, now I have the opportunity, on the incoming Government the importance of keeping to some parts of the policy of the James Government. Some people are apt to treat consumption lightly. Public opinion is a very curious thing. We find the public shrink at the name of leprosy, yet daily we find people consorting in their homes with a greater menace to them and to public health than leprosy. I do not propose that these unfortunate people should be placed, as it were, within a penal settlement, but I think where there is a chance of recovery, those suffering from consumption should have that chance under the most favourable conditions, and where there is no chance of recovery they should be cared for in a place where they can exist in comfort, and not be a menace to the rest of the community. I think perhaps I may, under the circumstances which I have already alluded to, be pardoned for saying a few words about my personal experiences in this Chamber. Although we have had no official notification of the change of Government, it is about to take place, and I would like to avail myself of this opportunity, rather

than weary members at another time, of expressing my very great sense of gratitude for the attitude which members have adopted towards me ever since I have been leader of the House. I do not think anybody who has not tried it realises that there is a greater amount of difficulty in leading a House which is absolutely a non-party House, than leading one that is cleaved in two by strong party lines; there is no doubt about it that there is a greater difficulty. You never know exactly where you are. With strong divided party lines you do; but I find, and I have found in my experience in this Chamber, while that is a difficulty, still there is one, and a very great, compensating advantage. I find that, as as there is no party, members in this House have lost all that tinge of bitterness that party government is apt to bring about. That is replaced by a sense of fairness, a sense of justice, and a sense fair play, for which I cannot sufficiently thank members. When I first came into this Chamber, it was under circumstances perhaps that might have led to some friction between myself and members. I was a new importation, and relatively a somewhat young man, and perhaps it would not have been very surprising if members had not received me with open arms. But I must acknowledge my appreciation of that justice and sense of fairness which I have already alluded to, and which has been extended to me by every member of this House. I cannot express my gratitude to those members who have been so kind as to refer to me in terms I feel are far too flattering. And if I have at times been at variance with any members, still I think that the variance has been such—I know it has been so far as I am concerned—that when it was over it left no rancour—[MEMBERS: Hear, hear.]—that whatever our differences may have been, once they were finished they were finished. I would like, Mr. President, to thank you most heartily for the kind assistance and advice which you have very often tendered me, and which have rendered the task of leading this House pleasanter than it would otherwise have been. Members will understand that it is scarcely competent for me at the present juncture of affairs to indulge in any criticism of our successors, whoever they may be. That I reserve to

myself for future occasions. But in supporting the Address-in-reply I would like again to reiterate the thanks that I feel are due to you and the members of this House for the kindness, consideration, and courtesy shown to me on occasions. (General applause.)

Question (to adopt Address) put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the House at its rising adjourn till 4 o'clock on the next afternoon. The business which would occur at the attention of another place on the next afternoon would be very short indeed, as he thought it would tend to the convenience of all parties concerned if the Council were to meet at 4 o'clock.

Question passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at 13 minutes past 6 o'clock, until the next day.

### Legislative Council.

Thursday, 11th August, 1904.

Urgency Motion, Reporting Speeches	...	PA
New Minister, Seat vacated	...	...
Adjournment (Ministerial elections)	...	...

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### URGENCY MOTION—REPORTING SPEECHES.

HON. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): move "That this House do now adjourn." For moving this I have one of the strongest reasons it is possible to have for taking the serious step