

both the Works Department and the Railway Department come into contact with the public, and, possibly, are blamed for more small failures than any other departments in the service. In matters of small detail, complaints are frequently made, and many infinitesimal complaints, which might have been brought under the notice of the Minister and dealt with immediately, are brought up in Parliament. But when we look round and see the numberless works which have been carried out throughout the length and breadth of the country, it may be perhaps admitted that the Public Works Department and the Railway Department deserve a meed of commendation rather than words of condemnation.

MR. WOOD (West Perth) moved that the debate be adjourned until the next sitting day.

MR. LEAKE: Let the debate be finished.

MR. WOOD: That was all very well; but six or seven members had occupied five hours, and it was not right that the time of the House should be so monopolised.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): If the legislative programme as set forth in the Governor's Speech had to be carried out, it would be necessary for hon. members to work, and it was desirable that the present debate should be brought to a conclusion. If more progress were not made, there would be the usual congestion of business at the end of the session.

Motion—that the debate be adjourned—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:33 p.m. until the next Tuesday afternoon.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 11th July, 1899.

Papers Presented—Question: Grazing Lands, Victoria District—Question: Mineral Leases, Northampton District—Truck Bill, Dividend Duty Bill, Weights and Measures Bill, Dog Act Amendment Bill, Rural Lands Improvement Bill, Noxious Weeds Bill, Pawnbrokers Bill, first readings—Return ordered (Federation): Bonuses to Industries in Eastern Colonies—Motion (urgency): Municipal Conference, Railway Passes (out of order)—Address-in-Reply: Sixth day of Debate, conclusion—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER OF MINES: Correspondence as to public battery at Norseman, moved for by Mr. Gregory; these papers containing all the information in the possession of the Department relating thereto.

By the PREMIER: Report of Lands Titles Department, 1898.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION—GRAZING LANDS, VICTORIA DISTRICT.

MR. MITCHELL asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands,—1, How many applications were received by the Lands Department for Grazing Lease $\frac{1}{2}$ s., Victoria District. 2, The respective dates on which such applications were received, and the names of the applicants. 3, Whether notice of the ballot was sent to each of the applicants. If not, why not? 4, Whether in granting the land to the successful applicant the provisions of Section 69 of the Land Act were complied with.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell) replied:—1, Five. 2, March 6th, 1899, Turner, R. A. M.; March 7th, 1899, Murphy, P.; March 8th, 1899, Clifford, M.; March 8th, 1899, Glacken, P. W.; March 8th, 1899, Davis, J. 3, No; it was not considered necessary. 4, No.

QUESTION—MINERAL LEASES, NORTHAMPTON DISTRICT.

MR. MITCHELL asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands,—1, How many leases, other than for mining purposes,

were applied for during the last financial year, within the Northampton mineral district. 2. Whether the land comprised in such application was examined and reported upon as to the existence or otherwise of minerals. 3. If so, by whom, and how qualified for such work?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell) replied:—
1. Nineteen leases were applied for.
2. The land within twelve of these leases was inspected and reported upon as to the existence of minerals; three were approved without inspection, after the applications were heard in open Court, under section 26 of the Mineral Lands Act, and the other four are awaiting inspection. 3. Ten of the leases were inspected by Mr. G. A. Varley, as Mining Registrar, and two by Mr. A. B. Fry, as Inspector of Conditional Purchases.

TRUCK BILL.

Introduced by the **PREMIER**, and read a first time.

DIVIDEND DUTY BILL.

Introduced by the **PREMIER**, and read a first time.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

Introduced by the **PREMIER**, and read a first time.

DOG ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the **PREMIER**, and read a first time.

RURAL LANDS IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Introduced by the **PREMIER**, and read a first time.

NOXIOUS WEEDS BILL.

Introduced by the **COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS**, and read a first time.

PAWNBROKERS BILL.

Introduced by the **ATTORNEY GENERAL**, and read a first time.

RETURN (FEDERATION): BONUSES TO INDUSTRIES IN EASTERN COLONIES.

MR. MORAN moved:

That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing,—1. The amounts

and durations of any bonuses to industries existent in the Eastern colonies; 2. those granted before June, 1898, which will therefore be in existence under federation; 3. those granted since that date; 4. the total amounts granted in the past for bonuses in the Eastern colonies.

This return was desired in connection with the great question of federation, as he wanted to throw as much light as possible on the question of intercolonial trade and the development of industries. The return would show what was being done in the Eastern colonies to build up industries, and it was only right that the people in this colony should know what was being done there. It would be probably found that in some of the other colonies bonuses were in existence, the Governments having taken advantage of the clause in the Federal Bill, which states that any bonus offered before July should remain in force. We in this colony had been sleeping, and if we joined the federation we would not be able to offer a bonus to any industry. This return might give a great deal of work to the statisticians, but on a national question such as this the Government officers ought to be at the disposal of the House, to provide information.

Question put and passed.

MOTION (URGENCY)—MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE, RAILWAY PASSES.

MR. VOSPER said he wished to move the adjournment of the House on a matter of urgency. The only reason he had for so doing was that to-night this matter must be decided, as otherwise one of the most promising institutions of the colony was likely to become a fiasco for this year—he alluded to the Municipal Conference which was to be held at Kanowna. He understood the Railway Department, for the first time, did not intend to grant free passes to delegates attending the Conference; and while he did not censure the department, he would like information from the Commissioner of Railways why this new move had been made. The delegates to the Municipal Conference had been engaged for some time in framing a new Municipal Institutions Bill, which would ultimately save this House a great deal of bother and trouble if the deliberations were allowed to go on unchecked; but if the delibera-

tions of the Conference were not allowed to go on, we would have a large number of suggestions sent to us by municipal bodies in various parts of the country. If these independent suggestions were sent here, the legislation would not be satisfactory to this House or the country. Unless the same privileges were granted to delegates as had been granted in the past, a number of the delegates would not attend the Conference.

THE PREMIER: Why was that?

MR. VOSPER: The delegates could not afford the expense.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The hon. member would get the information he required.

MR. VOSPER: The object he had in moving the adjournment of the House was to obtain some explanation from the Commissioner of Railways. The delegates should be allowed the same privileges as they had hitherto enjoyed.

THE DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I should like to draw the hon. member's attention to Standing Order 47, which says:—

A motion that the House do now adjourn, for the purpose of debating some matter of urgency, can only be made after Petitions have been presented and Notices of Questions and Motions given, and before the business of the day is proceeded with.

Therefore it is not competent for the hon. member to move the motion at this stage.

MR. VOSPER: I understood the business of the day had not been proceeded with.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have proceeded with the business of the day.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

SIXTH DAY OF DEBATE—CONCLUSION.

Debate resumed on the motion for adoption of Address-in-Reply to the Governor's opening Speech.

MR. WOOD (West Perth): Allow me first of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to congratulate you upon your occupancy of the chair. I am sure you deserve the honour which has been conferred upon you by the House; and I am quite sure you will not only carry out your duty with credit to yourself, but with great satisfaction to the members assembled here. I do not know that I am called upon to explain why I moved the adjournment of the debate on Thursday night; but I will

make a remark or two on that point. because my action caused such a chorus of dissent, principally from those members who had already spoken, and had occupied the time of the House respectively from twenty minutes to one hour and a half; I am sure members generally will agree with me and with those sitting on this (the Government) side of the House, that we had sat here for over five hours on Thursday night and were simply worn out and tired by the trivial and paltry manner in which hon. members had addressed themselves to the various subjects in their speeches. One member who spoke for an hour and a half I could not help laughing at, because one of his colleagues exclaimed, "The Lamentations of Jeremiah!" If a member on the other (Opposition) side of the House thinks that of one of his colleagues, what should we think of him?

MR. VOSPER: But Jeremiah was not a bad old sort, you know.

MR. WOOD: No; but you held up your hand in such a style and said, "The Lamentations of Jeremiah!" Almost the only reason I had for moving the adjournment of the House was to protest against the time that had been occupied by three or four members on Thursday evening. I think it is not only the right but the duty of every member to speak on the Address-in-Reply. Not a single city member had spoken last Thursday night, and it was not right to call on us to wind up the debate when the Premier would have had to start his speech in reply at about a quarter to eleven o'clock. I think I have said as much as is necessary on that point. The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) remarked that I was interfering with the business of the session. If any one had looked at the Notice Paper, he would have seen that all the business set down for to-day was a few first readings, and we should have finished the sitting before the tea adjournment took place. Therefore I do not think I can be accused of wasting the time of the House or of interfering with the business of the session. As regards the Speech itself, I heartily congratulate the Premier on the moderate tone the debate has assumed from its very commencement, but I must admit that a great deal of the "stuffing" has

been knocked out of the debate by the discussion of the frivolous amendment submitted by the leader of the Opposition, and which occupied this House the whole of one afternoon and evening.

MR. MORAN: It knocked the stuffing out of the Opposition.

MR. WOOD: Yes. The Government—and when I speak of the Government I mean the country—are to be congratulated on the recovery of the finances. I do not say the finances at the present time are all we desire, but still they are showing a recovery.

MR. VOSPER: A bad head too.

MR. WOOD: That is all right. At all events they are recovering, and that is more than I can say about many private individuals who embarked on the same sort of policy as the Government did a few years ago. At all events the finances of the country are in a fair way to get round. We have heard so often that we are living within our income.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Do you believe it?

MR. WOOD: Yes, I believe anything the Premier tells me because I have proved the Premier too often. The Speech includes a great variety of subjects.

MR. VOSPER: Like a directory.

MR. WOOD: And travels from Wyndham to Eucla, which was a fond expression in the old days, the same as saying from the North to the South Pole. Paragraph 2 of the Speech is about the most interesting and important part of it, as it refers to the question of federation. I think we who have really the interests of the country at heart, and those who have lived in this country for a number of years must be glad of the great change which has taken place in regard to this subject, both inside and outside of the House. The Federal Party have begun to reconsider their former statements, and after a fair amount of time we shall get them to some sort of reason. I must congratulate the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) upon the firm stand which he took at Kanowna the other night. We did not know what he was going to do, nor whether he was going to trim; but he did not trim like another gentleman who is now seeking re-election. The member for North-East Coolgardie went straight to the point, and for his straightforwardness he had a great

reception and a unanimous vote in his favour. I think he spoke about as straight as anyone since the federal movement started here. I do not want to say there has been any climbing down, but I may say those hon. members and gentlemen who have been fighting for the acceptance of the Commonwealth Bill, rightly or wrongly, are coming round now to reason. I do not want to accuse anyone of climbing down: it is a nasty expression, and one which should not be applied to members of this House. I am glad to see these hon. members are coming round to reason. We have heard a great deal about sending the Bill to the people; and the Bill must be submitted to the electors, because no power on earth can keep it from the popular vote. The only question is as to when the question should be submitted to the people, and, in any case, the delay can only be five or six months from now. A reasonable time is required to enable the people of this country to thoroughly understand the Bill, and then I, for one, will support the submission of the question to the electors. The Federation Bill is so full of complex questions, that I defy any man to get up and in a short address explain the measure. Every day we meet first one man and then another who finds some features of the measure adverse to the interests of Western Australia; and the question must be thoroughly considered and investigated before it is sent to the country. I am glad to know the Premier is taking steps to supply a full explanation of the Bill, for enabling the people to discuss every point; and I feel certain that, when every point for and against the interests of Western Australia has been considered, the common sense of the people will prevail, and there will not be the hurry that has latterly been displayed. Many people in regard to this Bill, like other persons who want to attack the Scriptures, try to capsize the whole fabric by pointing out one or two little words in a particular clause or chapter. I do not look at the Bill from any little particular point of view, but from the broad standpoint as to how it will affect this colony. I do not pose as a financial man or a democrat.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What are you?

MR. WOOD: I do not pose as a democrat, but I am as great a democrat

as any member in the House. My belief is that, so long as a man is honest and straightforward, and does the best he can for his country, there is no difference between him and the highest in the land. The point of view from which I regard the federation question is as to how the proposed union would affect the infant industries of this colony; and that is a point of view from which the question can be regarded by any person with common sense and ordinary ability. I do not go into figures or deal with finance, but merely consider how federation will affect this colony as a whole; and I have no hesitation in saying that, if we adopt the Bill at the present time, the whole of our industries will "go by the board." We have only lately, without bonuses or anything of the kind, made endeavours to supply our own wants. A country to prosper must be self-contained, and must produce nearly everything required by its inhabitants; and this country must be brought not only to the stage of supplying all local demands, but also be placed in the position of being able to export. Take, for instance, the agricultural industry, about which people in a light-hearted sort of way ask how it will be affected by federation, pointing out that production is fast coming up to the demand. I admit that production is coming up to the demands of 170,000 people, but is the production coming up to the demands of a population of 350,000? This country ought to be able to produce supplies sufficient for the latter population, because with less than 300,000 or 350,000 people, the country will be worth very little, owing to the fact that producers will have no proper market. The production necessary for 170,000 people is scarcely worth thinking about, and our aim must be to get a big settled population in the country and then work up, not only our agricultural, but also our manufacturing industries. Is it likely that we should be able to do this with inter-colonial free-trade, under which our infant industries must be stifled? It cannot be expected that with intercolonial free-trade such engineers as Fowler, Hoskins, or Mephan Ferguson would remain here a day after their contracts were completed, because they have their great works in the various other colonies, from which they could ship to Western

Australia with only the cost of freight to meet.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What is to prevent their doing that now?

MR. WOOD: The customs duties, to a certain extent. Federation means centralisation in Victoria and New South Wales, and I again say that I only look at this question from a West Australian point of view. There is no good in allowing ourselves to be lifted into the clouds, like the member for East Perth (Mr. James) and Mr. Matheson, M.L.C., both of whom would, no doubt, like to go to Rottne, blow their federation trumpets, and come back again. This question must be looked at from a West Australian point of view, or God help the country!

MR. ILLINGWORTH: God will help the country anyhow.

MR. WOOD: I dare say He will, if you ask Him. Under federation there will be immense protection against the outside world. I forget exactly what the Victorian tariff is, but I believe the federal tariff is to be about the same; and, taking the machinery industry as an example, federation would mean the removal of all the foundries from this colony to Victoria or New South Wales, which would become the distributing centres. Is it likely that machinery which came in from the other colonies would be any cheaper here? A federal duty on machinery of 25 per cent. would protect Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, but the people of Western Australia would have to pay as much as ever for their machinery. It is on this point I think the men on the goldfields have made a very great mistake. They want to rush into this federation, whereas they will find that with a uniform tariff machinery will cost more than it does under our present system.

MR. GREGORY: Why were industries not fostered here in the past?

MR. WOOD: It is only since we got responsible government that we have been able to start industries; and it would astonish many hon. members if they went around Perth and realised how many boot and clothing factories and similar enterprises have been established. I have made it my business to look into this subject, and I say that hundreds and hundreds of men are employed in those infant trades, at fairly good wages. But

if those industries are stifled, all the men now employed will go to the other colonies, and then what will become of the great Trades and Labour Council? And what will be the position of owners of property and land agents?

MR. A. FORREST: We might all have to leave the colony.

MR. WOOD: You and I are too old to go somewhere else and start afresh.

MR. A. FORREST: Speak for yourself.

MR. WOOD: I am quite willing to admit that I am not young enough to go and start a new business in a fresh country, and I contend that we must, as far as we can, conserve the interests of Western Australia, and, when the time is opportune, join federation. That is all I intend to say on this question, and I hope I have not been tedious. One matter I forgot to mention at the opening of my address was that, if hon. members who were so indignant at my moving the adjournment of the debate on Thursday last, do not want to listen to me, they will find refreshments outside provided at my expense. In the Speech there are not very many other subjects in which I feel greatly interested, but, of course, I naturally have an interest in the gold industry. All who are connected with this colony must be very glad indeed to see so great an output of gold, because we know that to a great extent the country depends on the gold returns. Still, I do not want that to be the only industry in this colony. With respect to the Coolgardie Exhibition, I think if we lose a few thousands in connection with it, the project will nevertheless pay indirectly. There is no question about that. It was a splendid exhibition, not only of machinery, but, best of all, of the natural products of this country; and it must have enlightened many people in regard to the productiveness of our agricultural lands. With respect to the gold exhibits, in common with everybody else, I was certainly amazed to see the splendid display of the precious metal. Such a magnificent output is bound in time to bring us round to a state of prosperity. The Treasurer will now, I think, take heart of grace, for very soon the attraction of our enormous gold production will fill his chest, if not to overflowing, at least to an extent adequate to the carrying on of the

various works of the colony. Hon. members—especially those who were in this House in the year 1894 or in 1895—must be very glad to see the success which has so far attended the Collie coalfields. I am happy to say that I advocated the development of those fields from the beginning. I did not know much about them, but there were men in the House who thoroughly understood the subject. The Premier, as I said before, knew all about it, and that was enough for me. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Quite so.] Make no mistake about that; I knew it was all right. And what has been the result? Why, that the only mine that was taken up and worked by the Government is the only mine that is flourishing at the present moment. It is now, of course, the property of a private company, and I sincerely hope that the managing director, who is temporarily disabled by sickness, will soon be about again, directing that important concern, which I should say is going to be a very large company. I do not know much about the difference in value between the different kinds of coal. To-day I saw a report by Admiral Pearson on the result of the trial of the Collie coal on his ship, the "Royal Arthur." It appears to me that report is not quite so good as those received from some of the intercolonial boats; still, I suppose the circumstances were different. If we had dinner on board a man-of-war, we should eat it in different circumstances from those we should find on an intercolonial steamer; and so with the coal. These men-of-war-men are too particular altogether, and too fastidious. However, we may congratulate ourselves upon one thing: that, if it is not a good coal for steaming purposes, it is a splendid fuel for stationary machinery; and, even as regards marine work, I suppose that all the "Royal Arthur's" stokers would have had to do, in order to get the best results, would have been to have opened their fire-bars. Had they done that, the result would doubtless have been perfectly satisfactory. I am glad to note that the developments during the last few days at the Mundaring dam seem to have allayed all fears with regard to the solidity of the foundation, and that we are in a fair way to proceed uninterruptedly with that very important work, the Coolgardie Water Scheme.

Paragraph 10 of the Speech states that the whole of the railway lines authorised by Parliament have been completed. I congratulate the Railway Department upon their success in carrying out those works, which, to my mind, are amongst the best-laid lines in Australia; and the working of the lines, as regards the traffic, is most satisfactory. There is no question about the efficiency of the service. We never have a late train; we start to the second; and what more can people desire? I have heard a great deal about the extravagance of the outlay upon these lines. Well, I have never travelled as far as Menzies. The Menzies and the Bridgetown lines seem to be the two concerning which people especially complain. Much has been said about the extravagance exhibited in the erection of buildings for the employees on the Menzies line. All I can say is that, if the buildings are no better than those to be found on the line from Perth to Coolgardie, the Government have not gone very far wrong. Because, to put a mau—a fellow being—into a less comfortable house than one of those stone houses which I have seen, would be an act of gross and inhuman cruelty.

MR. GREGORY: What about the accommodation provided for registrars on the goldfields?

MR. WOOD: Never mind about the registrars: those railway men have to live in a waterless country.

MR. GREGORY: So have the others. The registrars have to live in tents.

MR. WOOD: Those railway servants are just as much entitled to live in decent houses as any other class of men.

MR. VOSPER: They do not live in the station buildings.

MR. WOOD: And talking of the expense, after all what is it? What matter if, on a new line such as that is, the department have lost £50, £60 or £100?

MR. VOSPER: £40,000 is a mere flea-bite, I suppose?

MR. WOOD: Speaking of that, the Commissioner of Railways is doubtless fully able to answer all these little questions. He did answer them the other night to a certain extent; and, though his time was limited, he gave very favourable explanations, considering the time at his disposal; but, as regards this

question of accommodation for railway servants, I say that every one of them ought to have a house fit for a decent man to live in. Consider the isolated state of some of those men living on that line. Such a man perhaps, from year's end to year's end, sees nothing but an occasional train passing at twenty miles an hour. That is his existence; and surely to goodness we can give him a decent house to live in!

THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.

MR. WOOD: With regard to some of the public works, I do not know that I can altogether agree with the Speech. Of course there is no question of the utility of the Mint. I supported the Mint at its inception, and I well remember the speeches delivered by the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) and the then member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson), who admitted that it was a splendid thing; and knowing they admitted it was splendid, and it must be something a little more than splendid, seeing that they were in opposition, I at once agreed to and supported the proposal. One matter here is the question of the Observatory. I must say I do not think that institution is doing what it ought to do for this colony.

MR. DOHERTY: It is bringing the rain.

MR. WOOD: I really cannot see that the expenditure on the Observatory is justified.

MR. VOSPER: Look at the weather today: you could not have better!

MR. WOOD: It is all very well to put the thing off with a joke.

THE PREMIER: There is the time-ball, you know.

MR. WOOD: We never hear from the Observatory with regard to the weather, except on the day after we have had the weather in question. We learn that it rained yesterday. I am not saying a word against the Astronomer personally, for I believe he is a perfectly competent man; but he has, so to speak, nothing to go on. People talk about Wragge in Queensland. Wragge has everything to go on: he has information from all points of the compass — north, south, east and west; but our Astronomer has nothing whatever to guide him. I know my friend the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) will tell you that splendid work is being done, because one day the gentle-

man in charge of the Observatory told him that 20 points of rain would fall at Carnarvon. The next important paragraph in the Speech refers to the goldfields railways and the proposed new lines. Without committing myself very definitely on this subject, I want to say that I do not think we are at present in a position to construct those railways. It is a question of borrowing money. I think the history of the past ought to be a warning to the colony not to rush ahead too far, or too fast. After all, what difference will be made to those lines by a year's delay? None whatever. My own opinion is that the Government would be well advised if they did not push on those projects too rapidly. As regards the Northam-Goomalling railway, it is purely an agricultural line. Let us first of all inquire into the effect of that railway before constructing it. I do not think the history of the Greenhills railway justifies any further attempt in the direction of agricultural lines at the present time. To my mind it is all a question of funds; and I think we should wait, at all events another year, before we embark upon these new projects. I must congratulate the Government upon the way they have organised the postal and telegraph services. I think we shall find, when the report of the Royal Commission on Posts and Telegraphs is published, that if those important departments are not quite up to date, they are at all events fairly well up to date, and in a satisfactory condition. Be that as it may, my own experience teaches me that the departments are very economically worked. In paragraph 19 of the Speech, there is foreshadowed a tremendous amount of new legislation. On this subject, I must refer to the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran), who will deal with it more fully than I shall. I know that he has taken special interest in this particular matter, and I feel certain that he will enlighten the House, as he always does, in a very clever and instructive manner, upon these various Bills. I hope he will excuse my reference to him. I know that he has taken an interest in the proposed legislation, and I feel sure that when he takes an interest in anything he will give us the benefit of his undoubted ability. I am glad to note that the

Electoral Bill is to be brought before us this session. I was much disappointed that it was not brought up last year, because I think the existing Act is full of defects. At least I will not say it is full of defects, but it has one very great defect indeed, and that is the lack of a provision for the transfer of a vote from one district to another—from one side of the street to the other side. I do not know how that difficulty is to be overcome; still it is very "hard lines" indeed that a man should come to this colony, should reside here for twelve months, and should yet be deprived of his vote if he live for one day out of the first district in which he settled down. If he lives in one electorate for five months, and goes into another, he is debarred from voting, either in the old district or in the new, at the following election. That I think is the principal difficulty in the existing Act, and if we can only remove it, we ought to satisfy everyone. As regards the alleged difficulty of getting on the roll, the matter is simply child's-play. I have put hundreds on the roll in one night.

MR. JAMES: But the registrar will knock them off again.

MR. KINGSMILL: When they get on, their names are not allowed to remain.

MR. WOOD: I do not think so. It is the fault of the people themselves that they do not get on the roll. The twelve months' residence in the colony as a qualification for a vote is, I think, absolutely necessary. It is the same term as obtains in democratic Victoria, and I think if we follow Victoria in this class of legislation we cannot go far wrong. The main trouble is the lack of facilities for transfer from one district to another, and from one side of a street to another. If we can only overcome that, we shall at all events have overcome the principal cause of irritation in our Electoral Act. As to a dividend tax, of course all are agreeable to it; even the members for the goldfields who are interested in large concerns.

MR. DOHERTY: The tax may affect other than those interested in the goldfields.

MR. WOOD: We ought to a certain extent to confine ourselves to a tax on gold dividends, and leave the coal, timber, and any industry of that sort for further development. As to the

export of gold, it is a question I have thought a good deal about, and had come to the conclusion that the only way to frustrate the financial institutions with regard to the export of gold would be to put a tax on unmined gold. There can be no question about that. I have every confidence that the occupants of the Treasury bench will deal with this subject in a profitable and commendable manner. I hope the question of free education will not be slipped over this year, for it is a very important thing to the children of this colony; not that the parents of most of them cannot afford to pay the fees, but there are some who are unable to do so, and I feel sorry for those who are in such a position, and who may have the fact thrown in their faces. For the sake of those not in the same position as others, let us have free and compulsory education. I am sorry no mention is made in paragraph 19 of a Bill for bringing in payment of members. We all know that over two years ago a motion was passed in this House as to the desirability of payment of members. I am beginning to get tired of the present state of things. A number of us support five or six men who are drawing salaries at the rate of £1,000 a year whilst we do not get a shilling, what we do receive being a Ministerial smile and a pat on the back.

MR. VOSPER: What do you live for?

THE PREMIER: To eat.

MR. WOOD: To pay our election expenses, for it costs us three or four hundred to be elected, and I think it is estimated that on the goldfields it costs a thousand. Our hands are in our pockets all day long, for we are called upon to support any undertaking that is initiated. We are asked to subscribe to every blessed thing started in the town, and I say it is about time for a change to be made. If some other men come along and defeat us at the polls, I am willing to bow to the majority and clear out; but if we devote our attention to our parliamentary duties in this House we should receive payment, and it is worth £100 a year to have to listen to such speeches as those that were delivered the other night.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The privilege is worth £300 a year.

MR. WOOD: It is worth £100 a year to sit and listen to such speeches. If

they were pleasant speeches I would not mind, but one continually hears growling, and I repeat that, if a proposal for the payment of members is brought forward, I shall support it. Now I come to the settlement and cultivation of land, and I congratulate the Government upon the enterprise of the Commissioner of Crown Lands in this direction, all I hope being that he is not booming it too much. I do not wish to be a croaker—I think that is the proper term—but I am afraid this land settlement is being boomed a little too much. It is not the fault of the Commissioner or of his officers, but of people who, knowing nothing about it, go on to the land. Those people do not know more about it than I myself, yet they attempt a lot of clearing and cultivation, and I am afraid that in the course of time the land will be thrown back on the hands of the Government. Still, it will not be all loss, because the people will have spent a good deal of money upon it, and the State will have the benefit. With regard to the question of redistribution, no one can look at the last electoral returns without being at once convinced of the necessity for a redistribution of seats; but the question to my mind is how the seats should be redistributed. I am not at all in favour of redistribution upon a purely population basis, and, indeed, if I were to support such a system I should be doing wrong to the colony and to my own instincts. Every interest in the colony must be thoroughly represented. I would like to tell those members who speak against the North, or ridicule the smallness of the electorates of the North, and who have not been here as long as I have, that the North saved the reputation and credit of this colony more than once, by its wool, its pearl-shell, and other industries; so we must not forget our northern settlers, but allow the pastoral industry and the shell industry to be properly represented in Parliament. A lot of people, both inside and outside the House, want the redistribution of seats to be on a purely population basis. The great mass of the adult population at the present time are on the goldfields, and the rolls have been swollen to an enormous extent. I want to know whether the people whose names are now on the rolls are on the goldfields at the present time. Must we take the present

rolls for the basis of redistribution ? I say, no.

MR. MORAN : What else are you going to take ?

MR. WOOD : In regard to the distribution of copies of the Commonwealth Bill, I know of one place where the electoral roll showed 2,900 voters, and 1,700 of the papers issued came back. Is that a proper basis ?

MR. VOSPER : The list is not complete in that return.

MR. WOOD : I do not know. I assert that 1,700 of the papers came back from one particular district ; but I will not say which. Must we, I again ask, take that as a basis for redistribution ?

MR. MORAN : I do not think so. There will be a purification of the rolls.

MR. VOSPER : How many were misdirected ?

MR. WOOD : Yes ; but the people were not in that district.

MR. VOSPER : The real trouble is that they have not called at the post office for the papers. That is all. There is no difficulty on the fields.

MR. WOOD : I do not think that is so. I believe special efforts were made to deliver those papers to the people to whom they were addressed, but that the people could not be found. The member for East Coolgardie has about 5,000 voters on his electoral roll, and I do not know how many of the papers in that case came back ; but supposing 2,000 were returned, would you take the present rolls as a fit basis for redistribution ? I do not think it would be right to do so, for we ought to have a thorough purification of the rolls up to a certain date.

MR. MORAN : And enlargement.

MR. WOOD : Yes ; but let us make positively certain that the people exist.

MR. VOSPER : You ought to pass an electoral Bill before you tackle redistribution.

THE PREMIER : Hear, hear.

MR. WOOD : We must have a thorough purification of the rolls. It is not in the Governor's Speech, yet we find that the Government are going to introduce female suffrage. There is nothing to show how many women will be entitled to vote. We must have a thorough purification of the rolls to let us know that those men who are not entitled to vote have been struck off the lists, and

that all the new men entitled to be on the registers have had their names inserted. Let us see how many of the women are coming on the rolls, and what the rolls of Perth, Fremantle, and this part of the colony will be ; and then let us obtain the net result of all these rolls. Let there be a special meeting of Parliament in February, and have a Redistribution of Seats Bill passed in that month or the following one, and then let there be immediate dissolution. I may be wrong, as I often am, but I think this is as fair a way of dealing with the subject as we can possibly have. I wish to say a word in relation to paragraph 23, about a paltry matter ; for in that paragraph we are told the steamer "Penguin" at the present time is engaged navigating the coast of the colony. I think we bought a man-of-war for £7,500, and I would like to know what has become of that vessel, which was lying alongside the Fremantle harbour, taking up room.

THE PREMIER : No, no.

MR. WOOD : It was there a long time, and I would like to have information on the matter. I do not think there is anything else I have to say on the Address-in-Reply, and I shall simply complete my remarks by congratulating the member for Albany (Mr. Leake). I am glad to see he is back from his electioneering experiences, and I hope he has comported himself well while away. At all events I desire to congratulate him on the accession of members to his ranks, and all the harm I wish him is that those gentlemen who have left this (the Government) side, and have gone over to that (the Opposition) side of the House, will be of as much use to the Opposition as they were to us. And I think that the transfer is a matter of congratulation to us, for we now know exactly how we are situated.

MR. KENNY : No ; you do not.

MR. WOOD : We do. We have a compact party ; whereas, you do not know when you "have" the new members. We never knew where we had them. I am glad they are now on that side of the House, and I repeat that I congratulate the member for Albany upon the accession to his ranks of those members who have left us. We want to know inside the House who our friends are, and who our enemies ; and now I

again say that we have a compact party, and I think it will take something to shake them.

MR. LOCKE (Sussex) : I did not intend until quite lately to speak on the Address-in-Reply at all, for it seems to me it has been threshed out so long and so often that it has got stale news to all of us; but there are one or two little omissions I thought it my duty to bring before the House, and I must claim the indulgence of members for about five minutes, in which I think I can say all I wish to. To begin with, I suppose I must say something about the first paragraph of the Governor's Speech, which states that the financial position of the colony is sound. Personally, I never thought it otherwise, nor do I think anyone else did so. There have been a lot of croakers here one way or another, but I do not think anyone ever thought there was anything the matter with the colony. It seems to me we are going ahead all the time; all our industries appear to be progressing, and in these circumstances there is no cause for fear in the future. I think that is all that need be said on the position of the colony; and I will now touch on the federation question, which is a subject that is not so near consummation as some people imagined a little time ago. We shall have an opportunity later of threshing this matter out; and it is sufficient to say now that the country seems to be prospering and doing well; that our gold output is increasing daily, our timber industry advancing by leaps and bounds, our agricultural industry is also progressing and going ahead, so that we are catching up to the requirements of the colony; also that our tin, copper, and silver exports are increasing; that every industry in the colony is progressing favourably. Therefore, it seems to me that when everything is going ahead, and the country is progressing in every direction, we ought to be satisfied to leave well alone; but if we are not content to do that, we ought to move very cautiously. I have never been a federationist—at any rate, I have not been impressed like the member for East Perth (Mr. James) has been. I do not want to blow a penny whistle, nor do I want to see the country given away to the other colonies. If we can stand “on our own,”

and if we have advanced faster and more substantially than any other colony has done during the eight or nine years since we have had responsible government, it will be absurd for us to now give our birthright away without getting something in return. If we cannot govern ourselves, I do not see how we are to be governed from New South Wales. This question of federation will come before us again, and I hope even the member for East Perth, when he has his say, will treat the question lightly, like the late member for Geraldton has done. I am pleased to see that the late member for Geraldton has “come round,” for he made a most sensible speech at Geraldton, and I congratulate him on it, and wish he had always thought like that. I do not like to trim. I have been an anti-federationist all the time; and unless I see some good cause to convince me otherwise—I know a big majority of my constituents are with me—I shall remain an anti-federationist. There is no necessity to rush into federation when we are doing so well. If we were going back or in difficulties, if we could not see anything ahead, or we could see disaster in front of us, I should say, get some of the other colonies to help us; but when we are going ahead without assistance—I am not speaking now as an agriculturist—I think we should be satisfied to remain as we are. I have not been able to discover any one member, on either side of the House, who has been able to show in what way we are going to gain by federation. I suppose there is nothing which we can gain. Some members have told us that there will be a loss to this colony of £200,000 a year, if we join federation, while others have said that we shall lose to the extent of £40,000; all admit we are going to lose something, but I say we had better not lose it. We are all right in our present position: the whole colony seems to be going ahead. If you go into the street at night you will see everybody well-dressed and apparently well-fed, everybody appears to be happy, judging by the smiles on all faces, which is a sign there is no trouble. I have not seen any distress or trouble anywhere; therefore we want no change. We have heard many people say that federation is going to bring ruin and disaster upon us, but no

one has said that we are going to make a fortune out of federation. The whole question is one of sentiment, which is a fine thing, but it will not feed you. At the bottom of sentiment I think you will always find a personal motive, and I think the federationists have a personal motive, while those who support federation and have no motive do not understand the question. Why should we lose £400,000 or £200,000 per annum, according to the different authorities, for the purpose of federating when we can join later on? I do not think I need say anything further on federation. I am going down to the Vasse, and I can tell the people there more about it. The next subject which is worth mentioning is the Coolgardie Exhibition, and a lot of adverse remarks have been made about the exhibition. I had the opportunity, I am glad to say, of looking at that exhibition, and I think it was a credit to the country. If it did cost £7,000, or whatever the cost was, it will have been money well spent. I hope some of the exhibits, both those from the agricultural end of the colony as well as the gold exhibits, will be sent to Paris, where they will command a good deal of interest and attention. I want to say a few words on the education question, and I hope educational reform will be carried out this session. One of the strongest points upon which I was elected was free and compulsory education, but up till now we have not been able to get it. I hope this session we shall be able to pass a Bill having this object in view. This question does not so much affect the people living in towns as it does those who live in the country districts. In my district, in outlying places, when people go thirty or forty miles back, and settle and rear children, they cannot educate them. Three or four settlers may have amongst them fourteen or fifteen children, and these settlers cannot afford to keep a teacher, the result being that the children grow up uneducated. I think it is a disgrace to the country that we have not some sort of law to enable people in such a position as these settlers are to be subsidised, so as to have their children taught. I hope this session we shall be able to frame a good and acceptable educational law for the good of the country at large. The question upon

which I wish to speak principally is the construction of railways. The Government have intimated their intention of bringing forward several fresh railway lines—I do not know that I can call them fresh, as they were before us last year, but did not pass. Some of these lines may possibly be justifiable, and I hope those will be passed; but I want to say that there is a little railway which is required in the South, in my end of the country, that would pay from the start, and I believe an offer has already been made to the Government in regard to this railway. This line would open up some good country, although it is only twelve miles in length; it would open up and connect about 70 miles of country, stretching from Vasse to Quindalup. The Quindalup Company are opening up a number of miles, and at the other end the Vasse Company are opening up miles of country, so that there will only be about ten miles to connect Vasse with Cape Leeuwin. I think the Government might have put this short line of twelve miles into their programme. I hope they will do it now. I shall be disappointed if they do not. If the Government do not intend to submit this line of railway to Parliament, I shall bring the matter forward this session, and I hope to get support from both sides of the House. I hope to get the railway whether the Government intend to build it or not: at any rate I intend to have a try. Last session I brought forward this railway, but I did not then wish to press the Government, because things were not looking too bright. Now the country is pretty flourishing and the Government propose a railway to Norseman, which is a big undertaking when there is only one mine. The Government can build this paltry 12 miles of line very cheaply, and it will open up a large area of country. However, if the Government will not bring the matter forward I shall, and I believe I shall receive the support of the House.

MR. KENNY: Table a no-confidence motion.

MR. LOCKE: I shall press the matter as hard as I can if I am not able to carry my proposal. I shall have an opportunity of speaking on this subject again, because if the Government will not submit this line of railway to Parliament I shall bring it forward. The only other

matter I want to mention to-night is the dividend tax. I think, as we have spent a heap of money on a Mint, we ought to have a tax on the export of gold, instead of having a dividend tax. I have been informed by several members of this House, also by people outside, that this will affect the poor man. If a poor man has some gold, he wants to turn it into sovereigns as quickly as possible, and if he can get the gold turned into sovereigns at the Mint, why should he ship it in bulk? Our Mint has been built at great expense to the country, and it is not being overworked. If a man has half a dozen nuggets or any quantity of gold, he can get it minted here and thus save the export duty. Every ton of gold that leaves the country makes us a ton of gold poorer.

MR. DOHERTY: Richer.

MR. LOCKE: I cannot see that, because gold does not grow like cabbages. With a tax on gold there would be more revenue, and the Mint would pay. What is the good of building a Mint, if the work of minting is not to be done in this country? I know my proposal does not meet with the favour of every member, but my opinion is that an export duty on gold would be more profitable to the country, and would not be harder on the poor man than a dividend tax. Either a dividend tax or an export duty is better than neither; but I cannot see why an export duty should not be a good thing for the country. I have said practically all I have to say; and those hon. members who do not agree with the railway proposal I have mentioned will have an opportunity of voting against it.

MR. JAMES (East Perth): It is ever a pleasure to listen to the wise observations which fall from the member for Sussex (Mr. Locke), who has always got new ideas to impart, which he makes so clear, illustrating them in a way that no other member can equal. If some of us had any doubts as to the wisdom of a dividend tax, I am certain that, after the observations of the hon. member, all those doubts must be solved in favour of an export duty on gold. But the hon. member, representing a constituency so well known as Sussex, ought to realise that, if he wants to discharge his duty to his constituency, he should disregard his personal interests and introduce a heavy

tax on bachelors, or provide some means of drawing together the charming ladies of his district and the gentlemen of the goldfields. In such a way he would be more likely to do good than by talking about federation, of which he knows nothing, a fact which he has emphasised by his speech this evening. The hon. member has told us, somewhat sententiously, following the sententious observations of people inside and outside the House, that sentiment will not feed us. I never supposed that sentiment would feed us. But the marvel to me is that a class of people in this colony, who happily are growing less every day, seem to resent all suggestions of change, and to think that because for fifty years they have been going along a narrow rut, no effort should be made to improve matters! These people do not realise that we must keep up with the times, and that we must sometimes recognise the need of change. I do not propose in this debate to speak on federation, except to point out that, as I judge the position, the classes opposed to federation are divided into two. One class consist of those who believe in federation with a "but," and want terms; the other class consisting of those who believe in federation on the terms set down in the Bill now before Australia. There is no class, despite the misrepresentations which have been made in the Press, who want federation at any price; but the overwhelming majority of people think that the terms embodied in the Commonwealth Bill are such that any man who has a sincere and honest desire to further the best interests of the colony could accept without hesitation, and without doing wrong to the colony to which he belongs or to the greater nation of which we hope to form a part.

MR. LOCKE: Rot!

MR. JAMES: There are men who sincerely believe what I have said. It is somewhat peculiar that the anti-federalist is a cramped sort of individual, who lives like an oyster always inside his shell, from which he carefully excludes the light of day. The anti-federalist always seems to think that those who oppose him are not sincere; and he does not seem to realise that there can be sincere differences of opinion even on federation. I regret that people should take up a position so

intensely narrow and full of prejudice; but if the question be thus between those who believe in federation on the terms of the Bill, and those who think the terms of the Bill are not sufficient, the course is plainly marked out for us. When the Bill was introduced for the purpose of electing delegates to represent the colony at the Convention, not one word was said by any member about the need of asking for terms for Western Australia, different from the terms asked for by other colonies. After the Federal Convention at Adelaide at the beginning of 1897, the Bill as it had passed that Convention was placed before the House, and fought detail by detail and section by section; and the House then was the same House I am now addressing, and not one suggestion was made that special terms were required.

THE PREMIER: Oh, yes. Suggestions were made.

MR. JAMES: No suggestion was made that special terms were required. Some suggestions were made affecting constitutional questions only.

THE PREMIER: Financial suggestions were made.

MR. JAMES: Perhaps the right hon. gentleman will look the matter up, as I have done. No suggestion was made to the effect that this colony should ask for terms for the purpose of protecting our revenue, or removing the risk of financial loss.

THE PREMIER: You are quite in error there.

MR. JAMES: There was no suggestion about a transcontinental railway.

MR. DOHERTY: Why did we send the delegates then? To a picnic?

MR. JAMES: The work the delegates did was put before this House, and members had the opportunity of saying whether they approved or disapproved of that work. It does not shift the responsibility from the electors, if they say that, broadly speaking, they are satisfied with the work that has been done, but expected something better, something that was never suggested by the electors. There was also a Convention held in the following September in Sydney, and in the succeeding February and March in Melbourne, and during that time there was no serious effort made—

MR. DOHERTY: By the delegates.

MR. JAMES: There was no suggestion put forward in the Press of this colony, impressing on the delegates the need of special terms for this colony.

MR. VOSPER: It was then held, and always has been held, that federation means the construction of a transcontinental railway.

MR. JAMES: Perhaps the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) will refer to any particular speech in which that was laid down.

MR. VOSPER: If I looked the matter up, I could show you that what I say is correct.

MR. JAMES: This House had an opportunity of pointing out the need of a transcontinental railway, but not one word was said about it. I want to point that out, because some hon. members say that the delegates should have seen further than the electors saw.

MR. MORAN: Why not?

MR. DOHERTY: Yes; why not? The delegates were on the spot, and were paid for the work.

MR. JAMES: Assuming that to be the correct view, I say, with all respect to the hon. member for North Fremantle (Mr. Doherty), that I should be sorry to think he can see further than any one of his constituents; and I apply the same remark to myself and my own constituents. A great number of my electors are better men than I am, and no doubt a great number of the electors for North Fremantle are better men than the gentleman who represents that constituency; but, at the same time, these electors have no right to turn round and say that their representatives have evaded their duties. After all, that is a side issue; and what I want to emphasise is the fact that our Premier, when at the Convention, objected more than once to any terms for the people of Western Australia only, and held that whatever terms were adopted for the purpose of meeting our particular circumstances should be terms applied generally, although, as a matter of fact, this colony might be the only State deriving any benefit from those terms. The Premier was naturally anxious that this charter, which it was firmly believed would be handed down for generations to come, and be for all time, should not show on its face that special terms were given to Western Australia.

THE PREMIER: That is absurd.

MR. JAMES: That was the position assumed by the right hon. gentleman.

THE PREMIER: Not at all.

MR. JAMES: If I understand the speeches, more especially the speeches on clause 95 of the Bill, that was the meaning of the right hon. gentleman. In this colony there are the two classes, and two classes only, which I have already described; and, that being so, why should there be difference of opinion when the suggestion is made that the question be narrowed down and referred to the people for acceptance or rejection? If one side say federation is good for another day, and the other side say it is good to-day, and if those who are concerned are the electors of the colony, and the change proposed be one that affects every individual elector, why in the name of justice should any opposition be raised to referring the Bill to the direct determination of the people? The federalists ask neither more nor less than that the question should be so submitted. It is a huge mistake to think that federalists have for a moment changed the position they occupy. Whether federation be good to-day or not, we say there is one tribunal, and one tribunal only, to settle the question, and that tribunal consists of the electors exercising their votes in a referendum. If I understand rightly the action of the Premier, he himself has agreed that the electors of the colony do form the proper tribunal to settle the question. At the Conference of Premiers he agreed that, as soon as the referendum had been determined in New South Wales, steps should be taken for the purpose of referring the Bill to the people of Western Australia. I am not one who agrees in making this a party question, for I am anxious that the question should be free from party politics; and for that reason I should not have voted on the amendment moved last week to the Address-in-Reply. I was absent from the House through indisposition; but had I been present I should not have voted. Let me say that at once, so that there shall be no misunderstanding on that point. I did not intend to support that motion, because I objected most strongly—privately—to this matter being introduced into the arena of party politics; and I agree that we have no right to

expect the Premier, whatever may be his personal views, to take this up as a party question; but I think we have a right—and that is why I tabled the motion now standing in my name—to object to the party atmosphere in which paragraph 2 of the Address-in-Reply has been framed; because, instead of saying, as it well and truly might have said, that it was necessary for us to consider how far our financial interests would be affected, and to consider how far we would be justified, having regard to those interests, in entering the federation, I do not think the Premier was justified in placing in the mouth of His Excellency, and therefore accepting to a large extent as portion of a party programme, this statement, that as soon as the Bill has been accepted by all the colonies of Australia, it will then have to be submitted for our consideration. To that extent I think the right hon. gentleman was wrong, and to that extent he himself introduced a party question into the controversy. It seems to me desirable that, while the fullest time should be given for discussing this question, while the fullest time should be given for the purpose of letting the electors know to what extent federation will affect them, on the other hand no time should be lost in introducing the Bill into this House, so that we may know, once and for all, whether or not this question is to be referred to the people. There is a great deal of uneasiness on that point. There is a widespread feeling that this Bill is not to be introduced; that the Commonwealth Bill is not to be referred to the electors; that the matter is to be delayed, week after week and month after month, until the session ends, or until it is so late in the session that you offer a good excuse for members to vote against a reference to the people on the ground that the session is too near its close to permit of giving the subject the full consideration it deserves. [MR. VOSPER: Hear, hear.] We want the Bill introduced as quickly as possible; and the sooner the Bill is introduced, the sooner we shall have that most essential discussion on the extent to which our financial interests are prejudiced by the Bill, and the extent to which we wish to ask, or to which we think the colony ought to ask for terms, if we think terms should be

asked for. I think most of us are clear on this point, if I gather rightly the expressions of hon. members, with the exception of the member for Sussex (Mr. Locke) ; and I will say this for him : he has been perfectly honest and outspoken and thorough-going in his opposition to federation as a whole, offering in that respect a strong contrast to a great number of members who, although in reality strongly anti-federalist, seem to express a firm determination to have this Bill referred to the people, and then proceed to use arguments which, addressed to this tribunal, can only have the one aim and the one effect of influencing, if not this House, another House, in refusing to send the Bill to the people. Dealing with this phase of the question, I submit that this House is the tribunal which alone has the jurisdiction, and which alone ought to exercise the sole jurisdiction, in determining whether the Bill is or is not to be referred to the people. I do not now refer to this particular House, but to both Houses of Parliament.

MR. MORAN : Do you deny the power of the House to alter the Bill ?

MR. JAMES : I do not deny the power of the House to do what it likes to do. Parliament has the power to cut off people's heads, if it so desire ; but as it appears that most members of this House believe in the Bill being referred to the people—and that is the only question now before us—I cannot for the life of me make out why members who have said that should proceed to use arguments which do not affect that issue, and which can only be used for the purpose of encouraging those—it may not be in this Chamber, but it may be in another Chamber of the Parliament of this colony—for the purpose of encouraging those who will seize hold of such expressions to justify them in rejecting the Bill. Now, I think—I may be wrong—that the speeches of those men who say, “ I believe in federation, and I believe in the question being referred to the people ; but it is a bad Bill, which ought not to be accepted ”—when those hon. members proceed beyond that expression of opinion and give reasons for the purpose of showing why the people should not accept the Bill, I say those reasons and those speeches can only be made for the purpose of encouraging the anti-federalists in this

Parliament—not in this particular House alone ; the anti-federalists in this Parliament—in rejecting the Bill in another Chamber. I may be wrong. Those speeches may not have been made with that intention.

MR. VOSPER : Everyone has a right to discuss the Bill.

MR. JAMES : True ; but whether made with that intention or not, that would be the effect of them ; and it does appear to me that, now that we are about to have a chance of educating the people, there are only two ways of educating them—through the Press, or on public platforms ; by literature, or by word of mouth. You do not educate the people by speaking in this House.

THE PREMIER : They never read the speeches.

MR. JAMES : I am afraid they never read the speeches ; and even if they did read the reported utterances of hon. members, you could not fairly ask the papers to report those utterances fully. To say that the country is to be so educated is really unduly flattering us as politicians : it is too complimentary to our powers as debaters.

MR. VOSPER : The proceedings of Parliament are the proceedings of the country.

MR. JAMES : True ; so they are in theory ; but is the supposition quite equal to the reality ? I fear not ; and no one knows that better than the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper). Surely, if we all agree that federation is good—some say that it will be good to-morrow, and some that it is good to-day—we all practically admit that it ought to be referred to the people. Is not that the only question ? Certainly, we ought to allow the fullest time to elapse between this date and the date of the referendum for the purpose of allowing the people to grasp the real issues and the real consequences of their decision ; and I submit that we ought to address our arguments primarily to the people, and to get at them as closely as we possibly can.

THE PREMIER : Would you allow the women to vote ?

MR. JAMES : I would let them all vote : I have no objection to anyone. I believe in women having a vote, and I do not object to their voting.

THE PREMIER : You wish it, do you ?

MR. JAMES: As I have said, I have no objection to their voting.

THE PREMIER: But surely you ought to have made up your mind on that point, at any rate?

MR. JAMES: I should like a vote to be taken, not only of the present electors, but of every person entitled to vote—every person of full age.

MR. VOSPER: You would be willing to allow electoral reform to precede the referendum?

MR. JAMES: If the Premier would do in connection with the male voters what is now being done in connection with the comparatively few lady voters—if he would send round some person to see how many there are, and to put them on the roll if possible, great good would result. There is plenty of time to do that between to-day and the probable date of the referendum itself. Let us have as full a vote as we possibly can. It is a right of the people, and of every individual; and I should be delighted if the Government were to take steps for the purpose of placing on the roll every woman and every man entitled to vote.

MR. VOSPER: That would be a vote of the whole people.

MR. JAMES: That would be, practically speaking, a vote of every person over the age of twenty-one years. Let that be done; but if the right hon. gentleman wants that step taken at once, it is useless to delay matters further. I am sure we shall be soon enough if this referendum be taken at the end of October or November next.

THE PREMIER: There is no cast-iron hurry about it.

MR. JAMES: There is no cast-iron hurry about it; and I only ask that the referendum shall be held at such a date as will be soon enough to enable Western Australia to enter as an original State, if the people so desire; and it is because any alteration of the Bill by this House, before referring it to the people, would deprive the colony of that chance, and would deprive us of the right exercised by every elector in the eastern colonies, with the exception of Queensland—it is because the amendment of the Commonwealth Bill by this Parliament will deny to the people of this colony the right which is or has been enjoyed by the electors of the other colonies—that I object to any

amendment to this Bill being made before the referendum is taken. There may be ways in which certain amendments can be suggested to the people. I for one shall be glad to assist in every possible way for the purpose of having a full discussion on this question before the people, so as to let us know exactly what their wishes are; but I do not want this House to so alter the Bill that it will be sent to the electors, not as the Commonwealth Bill upon which every elector in the other colonies has voted, some of them twice—on which most of them are going to have an opportunity of voting twice—I want to give the electors of this colony a chance of voting on the same Bill as that on which those of the other colonies have voted, and a chance to say “Well, we will accept it as it stands”; or, “We will accept it with or without amendments.” I can assure the Premier, though I believe he is not in favour of immediate federation—perhaps I ought not to say so, and perhaps I should say I assure hon. members opposing federation, that we want a full discussion; that we are quite satisfied that, if the members of this House who do not believe that the present time is opportune will go before the electors and state the facts, or what they believe to be the facts, and will persuade the electors that the time is not opportune, that we shall lose too much financially by entering the federation now, I believe the electors will listen to these arguments, and will listen the more attentively the stronger federalists they are. That is where the federalists differ from the anti-federalists. The more strongly they believe in federation, the more open are they to reason; because it is a peculiar fact that the party which started discussion in this country was the federalist party. It was not the anti-federalists who first went outside of Perth for the purpose of explaining the Bill to the people. It was only when the federal party were endeavouring to place the Bill before the people—not afraid of the results of a knowledge of its provisions, but with an earnest desire to explain those provisions—it was only after the federalists had been working for some time in this direction that the opposition league began. I understand the main platform of that league is not one of opposition to federation, but propounds a

desire to throw light upon federation. Now we are all agreed upon that; and the federal league started to throw light upon the Bill before the other league came into existence at all; and as the other league wants to throw light upon the question, and as this House wants to throw light upon the question—as all of us realise that we only want to throw light on this question for the purpose of educating someone, that someone being the body of electors, then the sooner this question of whether the Bill is to go to the electors is settled, and the sooner we know whether the electors believe in federation on the terms of this Bill, so much the better. I understand from the Premier that the fear, a fear which many believe to be justified, is not well founded, and that there is an intention to introduce a Bill during the course of this month—that is, a Bill by which this House can provide that the Commonwealth Bill shall be referred to the people. If that be so, no one will be better satisfied than I, and no one will be more delighted to withdraw the motion of which I have given notice. I am only anxious that this feeling of unrest which is now prevalent should be satisfied—[Mr. VOSPER: Hear, hear]—that the people should know that, so far as we are concerned—and, after all, we can only speak for ourselves—this Bill shall be referred to them for their decision.

MR. VOSPER: It would remove all bitterness from the discussion.

MR. JAMES: As the hon. member very correctly says, it would remove all bitterness from the discussion. Nothing could be fairer than the stand taken by the federalists. They say, "Refer the Bill to the people"; and they will justify their faith by supporting the Bill which is to be introduced with that object. We shall have an opportunity of discussing the effects of federation, the effect of this Commonwealth Bill upon Western Australia, at a subsequent stage, when the Commonwealth Bill comes before us; and I think it is now desirable that we should, as far as possible, avoid discussion on that general question. I shall avoid such discussion. I only wish to make this one observation. In politics there are a great many people who suffer from mental indigestion: they swallow facts, and those facts stick on their chests, and they can-

not digest them; and they go about all day bemoaning their sad state. They are reminded all day of the facts they have swallowed, and cannot digest; and the facts are there, and they tell everybody they meet about those facts. That is the position of the anti-federalist with his facts. And these political dyspeptics are a good deal like the ordinary dyspeptic: they really think that other people, who do not suffer from dyspepsia, have never eaten, have never digested facts. I have been struck very strongly with the truth of this proposition when I have seen gentlemen parading round this country reading off yards and yards of the tariffs of the various colonies, referring to multitudinous figures that have absolutely no reference whatever to the question, and then coming back and receiving commendation from the local press—a press that has not the same justification as the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, at all events, had when it first adopted the advocacy of the anti-federal view, and had to face strenuous opposition—but a press entirely opposed to federation, and which does not hesitate for one moment to descend to the grossest misrepresentations for the purpose of prosecuting the campaign against the Bill.

At 6:30 p.m. the DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. JAMES (continuing): If the House will permit me, I will shortly restate the position I take in connection with federation at the present moment. On both sides of this House, whether we divide it by party lines or treat it as being divided into those who approve of federation at once and those who approve of federation at some future time, there appears to be a unanimous feeling that the question should be referred to and be determined by the votes of the people. There is an equally unanimous opinion that the reference should be held at such a date as to enable those who are called upon to vote to be seized of all the important facts connected with the question. I am fully aware that in the Bill, which I think I am right in saying has now practically lapsed, provision was made that after it had been adopted in

the Convention, it should be brought up and passed by the Parliament of this colony before it was referred to the people; but I gather from the speeches of members uttered in the House, and also from the speeches of some members uttered outside the House, that we have got beyond that stage now, and realise that the Bill ought to be referred to the electors for their determination. And that apparently was the view of the Premier when he agreed to the resolution at the Conference of Premiers, expressing the opinion that after the people of New South Wales had accepted the Bill it should be submitted to the Parliaments of the respective colonies for reference to the electors. There being common ground up to this stage, the only question is as to whether it is not desirable that the Bill which is to refer the Commonwealth Bill to the electors should be introduced forthwith, for the purpose of letting the electors know—not that they are going to have the Bill referred to them at a moment's notice or a few weeks' notice—but to let them know as far as we can tell them, and so far as we have the power in this House to grant them that right, the Bill will be referred to them. So far as I am concerned—and I think I am expressing the opinion of every federationist on the question—the date of that reference will be thrown back as far as it can be, consistently with the opportunity of entering as an original State if the electors desire it. We ask nothing further than that. It seems to me that as far as possible we should confine our observations to that point, though I should be the last to avoid discussion with reference to this question. I say discuss it and discuss it, and again discuss it, for it cannot be discussed too widely and too fully; but I think we perhaps tend to weaken the effects of our discussion, when we begin to discuss the merits of federation, for and against, at the present stage of our meeting, entirely over-looking the fact that we shall have the fullest opportunity of doing so when the Bill comes before us; and I think we are also introducing an element that throws no light upon the question, and renders no assistance, when members make statements that the delegates have been neglecting their duty, and have not been safeguarding the

interests of the colony. So far as I am concerned, I pay no attention to those observations. I am prepared to accept the Bill as it stands, because I believe that on the whole it is a just Bill, and I can assure you that, in arriving at that conclusion, I have not allowed my attachment to Western Australia to be hidden for one moment. I have never in the past, so far as I know, been ashamed to call myself a West Australian, or hesitated to express my attachment to the colony, and I am too strongly attached to it to support anything which I believe would injure it. In expressing my attachment to the federal cause and the Commonwealth Bill, I do so because I am fully convinced—by no means after a few moments' thought, or hasty consideration—that under the terms of the Bill the future prosperity of Western Australia will proceed at a rate which will by no means be checked, and although we may momentarily suffer from those dislocations which are bound to happen when any great change takes place, I believe that all the industries of this colony, the permanent industries and the development of the country, will proceed as rapidly under federation as they have done since we have had responsible government. I realise that there are differences of opinion upon that point, but I ask members to believe that those who are opposed to federation are not the only patriots in the colony. I reserve to myself the right to discuss fully, when the Bill comes up before us, the merits of federation, and how far it affects us, and I may say I thoroughly agree with that part of the Speech which states that public feeling in favour of a closer union is almost universal. That being so, the only question which will require careful consideration—I do not say it will require it in this House as if the House would decide it finally—the only question which will require consideration in the event of the Commonwealth Bill being adopted by the rest of Australia, is whether the Bill “so safeguards our financial interests at the present time as to justify us, as prudent people, with great responsibilities, giving up, to a very large extent, the control and management of our fiscal policy.” I believe sincerely—and I yield to no one in my attachment to and admiration of Western Australia—that we can do that safely, and that

our interests are sufficiently safeguarded, being in no way imperilled by this Bill, to which I give my loyal support. I desire to congratulate the Government on the bulk of the legislation suggested in paragraph 19, and it is legislation that I have been advocating for some years past, for it is very badly needed. I hope the Bills the Government bring forward in relation to the matters referred to, will deal with them in a thorough manner. It is no use placing upon our statute book Bills which have fine and high-sounding titles, unless they deal with things thoroughly, and I hope the Government will introduce Bills which will settle the various questions, at all events for some time. I notice a very important Bill which is promised us, dealing with the Bankruptcy Act. That Act certainly requires amendment to such extent that the present Act should be entirely repealed. The present Act in principle is inapplicable to this colony. It is an Act under which there is no punishment for a fraudulent debtor. We should have a provision under which a judge could punish a man who was fraudulent. I shall support the Government in what they promised, perhaps I would go further, in securing the observance of the Sabbath. I believe a provision is absolutely needed for that purpose, and I will give my support to any legislation which will set apart the Sabbath as a day of rest. When these Bills are brought forward I shall be able to deal with them more fully. There are two matters which are not mentioned in the Speech, and to which I desire to draw the attention of the Government. Hon. members will remember that last session a Bill was introduced by the hon. member for York (Mr. Monger) to repeal a previous Bill dealing with betting. I opposed that Bill, and I am sorry the Government have not promised to repeal the measure which was passed last session and to deal with the matter of gambling in a thorough spirit, because gambling at the present time is very rampant in Perth. Legislation should be introduced to deal with gambling in all its forms, and I would impress on the Attorney General the advisability and necessity of introducing a Bill to deal with the question thoroughly; if not to stamp out the evil, to place some strong check on

the excess to which gambling in the city of Perth is carried on to-day in connection with sports. There is another important question to be dealt with; it is a large and very difficult question, fraught with a good deal of danger, and that is the drink question. There are a great number of conflicting views as to the best manner of dealing with this matter. Some people think that by an Act of Parliament you can rectify anything within 24 hours. I do not believe in that principle at all. There must be some modification of existing legislation, and a gradual introduction of a better principle, because it is not possible to make a sudden change all at once. I would impress upon the Government the advisability of appointing a commission to deal with the question, and certainly to have some light thrown on the question so as to enable us in the future to deal with the matter in a thorough manner. Beyond these two questions all the other matters dealt with in paragraph 19 I shall refer to more fully when the Bills come up for discussion. I have great pleasure in supporting paragraph 19 of the Address. The only feature I object to in the Speech, which I have already referred to, is the uncertain way in which federation is to be dealt with. I can only repeat what I said before that we should give the electors, what has been practically promised them, a reference of the Bill to them. I shall be glad to do all I can to assist the passage of the Federal Enabling Bill and to deal with it, as I have always endeavoured to deal with the question, not as a party one, but as a national question, as it certainly is a national question. Believing the Premier will give that assurance, I shall have very great pleasure in withdrawing the notice of motion standing in my name, and give my hearty support to any proposal that will tend to secure the fullest possible discussion and consideration of the question before the Bill is submitted to the people. I only make this reservation, that the referendum shall be held at such time as will enable this colony to enter as an original State, if the electors so desire and approve of the Bill as it stands.

MR. HUBBLE (Gascovne): Referring to the Governor's Speech, I feel certain that all members are fully aware of the

amount of work that has to be done during the session, and I hope at the end of the session we shall have some good legislation resulting from the sittings of this House. The burning question of to-day—the question upon which the hon. member who has just sat down (Mr. James) was speaking—is that of federation. There can be no doubt that almost all of us are in favour of federation; but from my way of thinking I do not think we are ripe for it. Looking at all the interests in this colony and the industries which we have to foster, I reckon we have not had time to help these industries sufficiently. No doubt the Commonwealth Bill is a good Bill in most respects; it has been drafted by the best statesmen in Australia, therefore it has had great consideration at their hands. I am looking to the future of this colony as much as any one, and what I want to see is that the industries which we wish to foster obtain a good footing before we join federation and have inter-colonial free-trade: for these reasons I do not intend to support federation at the present time. When the time arrives I shall certainly favour the Bill going to the people to test the feelings of the people on the subject. As to the output of gold, not only this colony but the whole world must have seen our producing qualities are enormous, especially when we take into consideration the fact that the output of gold for the last month was considerably larger than that of any other colony. From what I can gather one mine itself is likely to turn out 100,000 ounces of gold per month, which must be a good advertisement. Reference is made in the Speech to the public batteries, and the member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory) when speaking the other night said that these batteries had been erected on the wrong sites. This member was one of those who advocated the erection of public batteries very strongly last session, and three or four of these batteries have been erected in the electorate which he represents. That being so this hon. member should have assisted the Government in putting these batteries on the best sites; but the hon. member blames the Government, or rather the Public Works Department, for having put these batteries in the wrong places. The Coolgardie exhibition has no doubt

been a good advertisement for the colony. I should have much preferred to have seen that exhibition in Perth, because it would then have been a financial success. Although the loss over the exhibition is, I understand, something like £6,000 or £7,000, taking into consideration the good it has done, I do not think this amount will fall heavily upon the colony. Reference is made in the Speech to the Collie coalfields, and I am certain we all, with one accord, hope that these fields will be a success because a good coal mine is equal to a good gold mine. The "Royal Arthur" which was here a short time ago took away 100 tons of Collie coal and tested it, and the report of the trial appears in this morning's newspapers. This must show to us that there is good coal at Collie, but I hope the deeper the mines are worked the better the coal will be.

MR. VOSPER: And the more water they will get.

MR. HUBBLE: In reference to the Fremantle harbour works, I am certain that everyone must look upon them as a great success, and not the white elephant which it was supposed the works would be when first started. When we take into consideration that large steamers enter the harbour, also that the "Royal Arthur" came into the harbour, it must be seen that the works have proved a success, and I shall be pleased to hear how the breakwaters have stood to-day after our experience of the heavy weather which must have been a severe test. As to the stock-yards and jetties which have been built on various parts of the coast, I can only say that I have had the pleasure of very recently visiting Carnarvon, where one of the stock jetties has been erected. There is a race on the jetty, and all that is wanted now, and I understand that it has been promised by the Premier, is a tramline and stock-yards to make the whole thing complete. The stock owners will then be able to ship their sheep from the far northern districts, and not to travel them overland and then ship them as they have had to do in the past. I am informed that at Wyndham and at Port Hedland there are good stock-yards and jetties. The wells on the stock route, and I can speak from experience of these, having seen some of them, are a good work. The

works have been carried out to the very best advantage, and when stock are travelling overland, the drovers will find the benefit of the wolls which have been put down along the route. The smelting works at Fremantle will no doubt be a great convenience, and I shall be very pleased when three furnaces are going, as I understand already there are only two in use. These two furnaces employ a great number of men, something like 250 hands, so that when the six smelters are going 500 men will be employed. The Speech deals with the agricultural and pastoral industries. I am pleased indeed to see the way in which the Government, especially our friend the Commissioner of Crown Lands, have assisted these industries. The Government are now giving every encouragement to farmers to go on the land and till it, and I believe in a short time we shall be able to produce sufficient cereals to keep the colony going without importing any. I am pleased to see the pastoral districts are having a really good season. The rains in the far northern districts, and I may mention one, the Gascoyne, have enough water to last them this season, and if we only have two or three good seasons following, with the price of wool as it now stands, and the sale of meat, the settlers in the northern districts will get over the difficulties they have been going through for some years. As to the redistribution of seats, that is a matter which the northern members especially should be very careful in dealing with. We cannot allow the goldfields members to have all their own way.

MR. VOSPER: No chance of that.

MR. HUBBLE: And shut out that portion of the country which kept the colony going before the goldfields were discovered. It will require careful consideration to place the electoral districts on a proper footing. As to a dividend tax, what I want to see is a tax on gold-mining dividends in particular. The member for Sussex (Mr. Locke) says he is in favour of an export tax on gold; but a tax on gold-mining dividends would be better, so as not to hamper the alluvial miner in any shape or form. Let the alluvial miner go out and find mines, and when these mines are paying dividends then let those dividends be taxed. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) is not in his place

to-night, and I am sorry the reason for his absence is illness, but I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without making a few remarks in reply to what that gentleman said the other night. That hon. member seems to have something to say about everybody and everything, and he made a remark that the Premier, when I went to seek re-election the other day, promised, as a sop to me, a tramway and a bridge in my district. I would like to inform the member for East Fremantle that before I ever thought of resigning my seat and offering myself for re-election, these particular works were promised; indeed, they were promised before the Premier took his last trip to the Murchison; so the member for East Fremantle is not altogether right in asserting that the Government have thrown out a sop to me or my electors. I have very much pleasure in supporting the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

MR. KENNY (North Murchison): It was not my intention to have said anything on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply; not that there is not plenty of material to speak on, but for the simple reason that I, with all due respect to those who hold different opinions, look on this debate as so much waste time. This debate is a relic of political barbarism, and the sooner it is disposed of and forgotten, the sooner we will get to business. But, following the example of many other hon. members, it may not be out of place for me to make a few remarks on this occasion. I must confess, however, that as a member of the Opposition I, like Othello, feel a great deal of my occupation is gone. First of all the Speech covers such an immense field that I can only pretend to deal with but a small portion of it; again, there are so many good things promised that it is difficult to find fault with them. I was both pleased and edified with the manner in which the Address-in-Reply was moved by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans). We all listened to that hon. member with every attention and with a good deal of profit. I was most pleased with his remarks in regard to the great benefit the public batteries will be to the working men and prospectors on the goldfields, inasmuch as I was always led to believe that the hon. member, being a capitalist himself

and the representative of capital, would ever and always take a very strong side against the establishment of public batteries. Now, however, I have no hesitation in saying that the remarks of the member for Coolgardie on this question did credit to both his head and his heart, and if other representatives of capital in the House, and representatives of labour were all to show that same honest, straightforward consideration for each other, we would hear very little of splits or unpleasantnesses between capital and labour. I notice it is the intention to continue the public battery policy, and on this decision I congratulate the Government, because from experience I can say that so far this particular policy has been a great success. I was sorry to hear the member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory) make such very strong complaints against certain Government officials connected with the public batteries, and more particularly was I sorry to hear what that hon. member had to say in regard to certain civil servants. There is nothing easier than for a member to stand up and use very severe expressions against civil servants. I am fully alive to the fact that hon. members have a very powerful position in this respect, but the very fact of the possession of this power ought to make us very wary indeed of using it. It is, as I say, a very easy matter to stand up and blame civil servants who have no right of reply, and, possibly, to condemn or traduce them in the columns of a newspaper we may own ourselves. I hope it will be many a day before the House will again experience the unpleasantness of listening to such complaints as were made the other evening by the member for North Coolgardie. Some very harsh reflections were cast on the management of public batteries. I do not think there is a representative of the goldfields more closely in touch with the Mines Department in Perth than myself, or a member who can speak with greater experience of how the department is conducted. I have no hesitation in saying that there is no more able, trustworthy, and hard-working member of the service than Mr. White, the manager of the public batteries: and in regard to the Minister of Mines, a great deal was said when he was first appointed—and I joined in those remarks and felt I was

justified in doing so—as to his inexperience. To-night I am proud to say that the hon. gentleman has made up with perseverance and strict attention to his duties what he lacked in experience, and I am perfectly justified in saying there are few gentlemen who have held the office of Minister of Mines, since the present Government took office, who had a better grasp of their official duties, and that no Minister has more honestly or straightforwardly fulfilled his obligations than the present occupant of the office. As to the Coolgardie Exhibition, I had the pleasure of being present both at the opening and the closing ceremonies, and if the only result of the Exhibition has been to get together that magnificent display of minerals, the money expended has been well spent, because a greater advertisement to this colony it would be impossible to get. Reference is made in the Speech to the development of the Collie coalfields. This is a matter on which we may heartily congratulate the colony, but, while the Government are doing their best for the development of these fields and I am pleased to hear that a good coalfield has been discovered near Albany—we should not forget that on the Irwin we have equally good coal. I hope the day is not far distant when the Government will see their way clear to do as much for the Irwin as the Collie, because I feel confident that the former fields would give an equally good return. As to the Fremantle harbour works and similar undertakings in different parts of the colony, the people of Fremantle ought to have felt justly proud the other day when such a magnificent vessel as H.M.S. "Royal Arthur" was comfortably berthed in the river, and when a very great compliment was paid to the harbour by the commander, and later by Captain Angus, who has been sent to report as to the shipping facilities at Fremantle. I hope the time is near when not only the German line of mail steamers, but also the vessels of the P. and O. and Orient lines, will be seen at Fremantle. On the question of water supply I must say a lot has been done, more particularly on the goldfields, but I respectfully remind the Government that much remains to be done. I hope that in the coming year, when the Government are turning their attention to the

question of water supply throughout the colony, they will not forget the promise they made a short time ago to see what could be done in the way of a healthy water supply for Geraldton. The member for that constituency is not here.

MR. MORAN : Who is he ?

MR. KENNY : The hon. member will know next week, and as the member for Geraldton is not here, hon. members will excuse me for saying these few words in his absence. I also note that reference is made in the Speech to what has been done in the way of boring for water on the goldfields. I hope the Government will this year see their way clear not only to continue the system of prospecting for water, but to go further, and supply boring apparatus to prospectors in goldfields centres. I am sure that would be a step in the right direction, and tend to the discovery of payable leads and other resources, such as have been discovered in the eastern goldfields. While many people characterise the Perth branch of the Royal Mint as a costly toy, I certainly think it a splendid advertisement that the colony should not only produce gold, but mint it, and send it broadcast throughout the world. In reference to post and telegraph extension, the Government will permit me to thank them for the telegraph line erected from Nannine to Peak Hill, and also for the line about to be commenced from Nannine to the Star of the East Mine; and I am sure the Government will find both lines give a good return for the outlay. I look on the question of federation as too important and too great to be handled lightly on an occasion like this at the eleventh hour of the debate on the Address-in-Reply. Ere long federation will come before the House in a different form, and then I will do my best to give my opinions on this all-important subject. Before I sit down I would like to say one word in regard to some very harsh remarks which have been made on the action of the Opposition in regard to the amendment recently moved on the Address-in-Reply. I can say for myself, and I am confident I am speaking at least for the majority of the Opposition, that the only object was to point out to the Government a grave omission in the Governor's Speech, and to supply that omission. In the Speech no reference was made to any arrangement to refer

the Federal Bill to the people, and the Opposition endeavoured to supply the omission. That alone was the intention with which the amendment was tabled. It has often been said, and with a great amount of truth, that we have no politics in Western Australia—that the policy of Western Australia is one of “loaves and fishes.” That may have been true up to the present time, and I can scarcely believe that the same Government is in power to-day as were in power twelve months ago. When I read that it is the intention of the Government to lay upon the table a Bill providing for the improvement of rural lands, a Bill for encouraging local industries, a Bill for free education, a Bill for promoting Sunday observance, which will more particularly apply to the goldfields, a Bill dealing with foreign companies' local registers, a Bill providing for a dividend tax, a Conciliation Board Bill, a Trades Union Bill, a Bill dealing with the pernicious truck system so much in vogue on the timber stations, and in connection with other large companies in the colony, a Public Service Bill, in favour of which I had the honour of tabling a motion some twelve months ago, a Bill amending the Electoral Act, and a Redistribution of Seats Bill, I can only say that sad will be the day and low indeed the standard of party government when a member of the Opposition refuses to grant honest support to any Government which will introduce such measures as we find here.

SEVERAL MEMBERS : Hear, hear.

MR. A. FORREST : Come over to this side of the House.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie) : It is very refreshing to hear such an expression of opinion as has just been uttered by the Opposition “whip” in reference to this liberal programme of the Government. He feels as I do on this matter. Western Australia, which has for the past four or five years been putting up some very large records, is going to put up another record. I do not think any country or any colony in the world ever had such a programme of liberal and democratic measures placed on the table for its delectation, as we have this session. We have in paragraph 19 of the Speech proposals for our consideration, and we hope our adoption, which have taken the other colonies

twenty years to arrive at; and there is no mistake, as I said before, that Western Australia, if she carries out that programme this session, as I hope we shall, will have established a world's record for the enactment of liberal legislation in the course of a session. We have already established a record in the way of public works development; we have established a record by undertaking a gigantic scheme such as the world has never seen before; we have established a record, and we are going to hold and keep it, for the output of gold in Western Australia; and now we have the Forrest Government proposing this list of Bills which has just been read by the member for North Murchison (Mr. Kenny). The thanks of the country are due to the Government, if they so manage this House during the session as to place these measures on the statute book of Western Australia; and it will be hard indeed to find any grounds, either of public expediency or of democratic sentiment, on which to unseat the Government when they again go before the country. I do not know what more we need require. A good and vigilant Opposition have been able, through their advocacy, to impress upon the Government the necessity for all this liberal legislation. The Opposition of the country have done their work very well indeed; and the result serves to show and to prove that the existence of an Opposition—a solid and obedient Opposition—is of some benefit to the country, after all.

A MEMBER: It is a disobedient Opposition.

MR. MORAN: I decline to say anything about that. It is not fair.

MR. KENNY: Hear, hear.

MR. MORAN: It is not for us to endeavour to put in order the houses of others, for we have a fairly big handful to look after on this side of the House and in the Government, without bothering about the Opposition.

MR. VOSPER: Hear, hear.

MR. MORAN: I am sorry the member for East Perth (Mr. James) did not also put up a record this evening by remaining in the Chamber, just for once in a while, after he had said his say, to hear what other members might say about it; but I fear we shall have to wait a good deal longer before we get the member for

East Perth to debate any subject in this House. The hon. member is well worth listening to, but he does not care to give the same privilege or extend the same courtesy to others as they do to him. I do not know whether to impute it to carelessness; I cannot impute it cowardice, for we know the hon. member is not a coward; but it is a great pity that he does not debate a little more, that he does not wait here to see what effect his remarks have had on the House. No notice need be taken of his further overflow this afternoon with regard to federation. We all know he is an ardent federalist; but when he propounds the startling theory—as he did this afternoon in reference to the delegates sent to Sydney and Melbourne to the Federal Conventions and as to hon. members who elected them—by saying in such a dignified way that it is an awful thing for anyone to dare to interfere with the Bill to which those delegates consented when they were over there, then I must say the hon. member is going too far. His words were these—"It does not lie in the mouths," said he, "of any elector to extend or interfere with the work done by the elected"—the delegates. In other words, the members of this Parliament elected certain delegates. I did not vote, but I was then a member. We elected those delegates; and the hon. member (Mr. James) propounds the startling theory that no elector has any right to interfere with, or to say a word about, what those delegates have done.

MR. LEAKE: I do not think he said that.

MR. MORAN: I took the words down. He said "It does not lie in the mouth now of any man to talk about terms, when we sent delegates over there, and after the work they have done." That is what he said, exactly: there is no doubt about that. What a delightful thing it would be for members of Parliament, if we could apply that theory to our electors; if we could gag our electors so that none of them could ever say a word about what we had done in this House? Would it not be an Elysium for the poor unfortunate member of Parliament, if he could instil that theory into the bosoms of his own constituents, that nothing he did could be afterwards questioned? The position is exactly the same here; for we

elected certain delegates, we sent them there to do their duty, and we expected that every delegate would do his duty. Whether they did or not, they can best answer to themselves; but it is surely a new theory to say that this House parted for ever with any privilege it might have to review the work done by its own elected delegates, after they came back. We are not only asked to swallow this theory, but to give away the privilege of the Parliament of Western Australia as well; yet the hon. member himself says, "Why not discuss this Bill? Why not have it down, and discuss it at the greatest length possible?" So, he himself controverts his own theory, for he said, "Let us have the Bill down, and let us discuss it here." But to what end shall we discuss that Bill?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We cannot amend it.

MR. MORAN: To what end are we going to discuss the Bill? What is the object of bringing the Bill before Parliament at all? If the House in their wisdom see fit to alter that Bill, I want to know what reason on earth is there why they should not alter it?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We have never abrogated our right to alter it.

MR. MORAN: Precisely. Have we abrogated our individual rights as members of this House? If so, how have we abrogated them, and for what reason?

THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.

MR. MORAN: Is it because there is a precedent set us by the other Australian colonies? I say certainly not. We have not a single precedent in all the Australian colonies. As a visitor to Western Australia at the present time, we have a member of the New South Wales Legislature, a representative of the Labour Party there. I think several members have met him in Perth, and were pleased to extend to him a hearty welcome. This gentleman appears to me to be a man who would do his duty to his electors, and certainly belongs to a party in New South Wales who have done a great deal for that colony, and who have done great and good work in liberalising legislation in their own Parliament; and who, no matter how extreme their views may be

considered, have never been accused of want of loyalty or patriotism to the colony of New South Wales. The same observations apply to all the labour parties in Australasia. These men are enthusiasts, but I have never doubted their earnestness on behalf of their own country, and their honesty in working for the interests of those whom they represent. I think this is only a just tribute to pay to the labour parties of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia. Their views may not agree with those of other members; they may take extreme social views, and advance democratic views, but they certainly take honest views, and as far as we know they are in touch with their electors. This gentleman of whom I spoke belongs to one party in New South Wales who offered the most strenuous opposition to the Federal Enabling Bill in that colony, and who did their level best to have their views imprinted on the Bill; and not only that, but, in the constituencies of some of them, a large and overwhelming majority declared for the Bill, although their own representatives declared against it. The men in that colony understand public life. Although the individual voters of those electorates declared for federation, they did not seek to gag their representatives in the House; nor do these men now seem to be at all afraid that they have earned the ill-will of their constituents by seeking to impose on the Bill the views of the parliamentary labour party. They did their best to incorporate those views in the measure, and they went down; they had not the power; but it was only a chance that they did not have the power, more especially in Queensland, where they would probably have succeeded had it not been for the defection of one member; and it was only by the merest chance that the Federal Bill was not altered in some of the other Houses of Parliament. And why was it not altered? Simply because the majority of the members were not there to alter it; but there was no question of their power or of their constitutional right to do so.

THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.

MR. LEAKE: Each Parliament altered the draft bill.

THE PREMIER: They tried to do it, but were unsuccessful.

MR. MORAN: The leader of the Opposition is perfectly right; but then he says to us that we must therefore not seek to alter this Bill, although it is going to bind this colony for all time—for generations to come!

THE PREMIER: For ever and ever.

MR. MORAN: For hundreds of years. We must not alter it—why? Because we should incommode the other colonies in so doing. I admit the awkwardness of the position; but what did Mr. George Reid, of New South Wales, do in the mother colony? Did he scruple for one moment to alter the Bill there? And what have we heard in this House? I am not at liberty to refer to a prior debate which took place this session; but I have heard the leader of the Opposition himself say that, had it not been for the action of Mr. George Reid, federation would now be an accomplished fact. Therefore Mr. Reid set back the hand of time; and for what end? In order that some absolutely material gains should be granted to New South Wales; in order that all the privileges and all the money, and all the influence, which belong to a great federal capital, should flow into New South Wales; in order that all the wages of the federal city should be spent there; in order that all the cost of building a great city, as I have said, should be incurred in New South Wales. That is a material advantage, and Mr. George Reid did not scruple to defeat the referendum in New South Wales by making essential a minimum vote which he knew would never be reached. That is a great example, surely.

THE PREMIER: He altered the minimum from sixty thousand to eighty thousand.

MR. MORAN: Yes; to an impossible number, which he knew at the time could not be reached; and what did he do afterwards? He coolly set to work and asked all the other Premiers of Australia to meet him, in order that they might discuss the Bill. To what end? In order that every amendment which the Premiers made to the Federal Bill should be in the interests of New South Wales and Victoria—principally of New South Wales; so that those colonies should be in an absolute majority at the meeting of the Federal Parliament. What does that mean? It means that New South

Wales and Victoria, owing to their large populations, could swamp the rest of Australia. If it does not mean that, what does it mean? It is simply a step towards unification. George Reid did not scruple to achieve those ends; but on the other hand, the Labour Party in New South Wales endeavoured to set the stamp of their approval on the Bill, coupled with an addendum and some other proposals which they wanted to incorporate with the measure. The particular object of the Labour Party in New South Wales was that they wanted to make the Bill more democratic than it is at present; they endeavoured to wipe out altogether the State rights. There is no federal constitution in the world to-day at all approaching the proposed federal constitution of Australia—not one. There is no constitution in the world where the Upper House has not the power of veto. That power is taken from the Upper House in the federal constitution; and the Labour Party of New South Wales, acting up to their professed principles, of which the rule by absolute majority is one—endeavoured to have that principle incorporated in a clause providing that, on the question of an amendment of the constitution, the majority should rule, altogether independent of where the votes were. In other words they said: let there be a united vote against the amendment of the constitution in West Australia, in Tasmania, in South Australia—I think I may also include Queensland, and still be honest—and if those four colonies vote against an amendment, and there be a unanimous vote for the amendment in Victoria and New South Wales, that amendment will be carried. That is the clause the Labour Party in New South Wales endeavoured to put in, and they were only following out their professed principle that there shall be a united Australia, and that the majority shall rule in all cases.

A MEMBER: That is not federation.

MR. MORAN: I agree that it is not federation: it is unification. Still, the Labour Party did not scruple to endeavour to get this inserted in the Bill, and they were acting honestly. But I take it that in Western Australia we do not wish to destroy States rights, and, if States rights are destroyed, only three or four years will elapse before trouble begins.

There is no federation in the world where the Upper House is nullified as in the Australian federation: and our Premier was at the Conference of Premiers where the only shred of power left to the Upper House was destroyed. The Premier is a democrat, a notorious Radical of the worst kind, for we need only look at Clause 19 to see that he "out-Herods Herod": and Charlie Kingston is not "in it" with him. What I wish to point out to the member for East Perth is that we only wish for the privileges that are possessed by all other parliaments; and that is altogether independent of the belief we hold as to whether we should alter the Federation Bill or not. I do not say for one moment whether I am prepared to alter the Bill or not, or whether it is as perfect as the brain, intellect, and knowledge of the world can make it, but there is only one great question to be considered, and it is that we have not absolute States rights in the Commonwealth of Australia. They have gone; and, once we federate, they will be gone for ever. Let that be borne in mind, that when the Upper House disagrees with the Lower House, it may be dissolved, and, in the event of a deadlock, members of both Houses are to sit together, there being a large Lower House and a small Upper House, and the majority will rule.

MR. LEAKE: How does that destroy State rights?

MR. MORAN: If the hon. member does not know, I will not tell him.

MR. LEAKE: I did not wish to interrupt.

MR. MORAN: I quite understand that. I do not wish to go into a long dissertation on the Bill, but the hon. member can see that the power of the small States is in America conserved in the Upper Chamber. In every federal constitution in the world that I know of, the Upper House can conserve States rights, having the power of veto; and, during the term for which they are elected, members cannot be shifted. Can the Senate of New South Wales be interfered with? Not at all. There it remains, solid as a rock, from the time of its election. What will happen in federated Australia as soon as a difference occurs? The Governor may dissolve both Houses, the powerful weapon of dissolution hanging

over the Senate the same as over the Lower House. If that were all, it would not matter so much, because, no doubt, the smaller colonies would send back the same well-trying and good men; but, under the Commonwealth Bill, what will be the use of sending back the same men after a general election? It will be simply a waste of time, because the members of the Senate and the members of the Lower House will sit together, the Lower House consisting of 70, 80, or 90, and the smaller House of 30 members; and, no doubt, the senators for New South Wales and Victoria, combined with the big majority in the Lower House, will defeat the wishes of the smaller States. Is not that plain? That does not prevail in any other constitution. I am not giving my views on the Federal Bill, but pointing out that State rights will no longer exist under federation. Surely this is a serious matter, and worthy the consideration of the House, is it not? It is a big change in the politics of the world, and it is the first time it has ever been introduced in modern history. It is the first grand stride in federation towards simple majority rule, independent of State rights altogether.

MR. VOSPER: There has been a change in the Bill which was never sanctioned.

MR. MORAN: I have said that such is the case, and we have to blame our Premier for being one of the consenting parties. I do not know exactly what was done; but I think the Premiers decided in favour of simple majority rule in the meeting of the two Houses in cases of deadlock.

A MEMBER: Previously the provision in the Bill was that there should be a three-fifths vote.

MR. MORAN: Yes; it was to be a three-fifths vote, and now there is to be a simple majority rule. Mr. Reid gained a great and magnificent point, for where the coal of Newcastle is there will be a large centre of population, as is the case in the eastern and western States of America.

A MEMBER: How about Collie coal?

MR. MORAN: I am asked about Collie coal. It is not wise to prophesy, but let me say that as soon as the bounties and duties are altogether swept away, the Collie coal may find it difficult to compete against the Newcastle coal.

If the Labour party could have altered the Federal Bill they would have done so, and if any party in this Chamber like to try and alter the Bill, are they doing anything wrong?

A MEMBER: Certainly not.

MR. MORAN: There is no obligation on the part of this Parliament to swallow the Federal Bill, notwithstanding that our Premier was at the Federal Convention, and that nine other delegates were sent there because we thought they were good men.

THE PREMIER: It was never intended to bind Parliament.

MR. MORAN: I quite agree that so far as regards the power and influence of the member for East Perth, it would have been just as well if an ordinary elector of Perth had been there. We wasted money in sending more than two or three delegates. Why could we not have sent the Premier with nine proxies in his pocket, and let him vote every time? He was the only man who spoke.

THE PREMIER: The delegates did not always vote with me.

MR. MORAN: They might have been brought up to vote.

MR. JAMES: I would like to stand in the colony against the Premier.

MR. MORAN: Don't lose your hair. "Let the galled jade wince." I certainly am not agitated about the matter at all. I did not even vote for one of the delegates, for at the time I thought they should be elected by the people, and therefore I declined to vote. Probably when the Bill is before the country, the member for East Perth will not have all the virtue of dealing with the question from an intellectual standpoint. I am only sorry he did not display the same energy and attention to the interests of Western Australia when he was at the Convention, and when his voice would have been heard, as he is displaying now.

THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.

MR. JAMES: I was the only one who had the courage to ask for terms. That is a nasty jar for you.

MR. MORAN: What do you think of a man who goes once and asks for terms, and never appears afterwards?

MR. VOSPER: He got excellent terms for Western Australia.

MR. MORAN: He got excellent terms, and I am not quarrelling with the hon.

member, who must not get so bitter over this matter. I am simply pointing out that Western Australia is in the same position as all the other colonies, for they have all tried to have their say on the Federal Bill, and if the majority of members in this House are able to speak on the Bill, let them do so; but let us not have members coming into Parliament and saying Parliament has one thing to do, and only one—to bring the Bill down and never open the covers, but send it to the people. I assert that the duties of Parliament should not be abrogated in that way. Parliament is supposed to be for the discussion of everything that is for the welfare of Western Australia, and if Western Australia is to form part of federated Australia, it is the plain duty of Parliament to deal with the Bill the same as the other colonies have dealt with it.

MR. WILSON: That is what we want to do.

MR. MORAN: I suppose you do; and I give the hon. member every credit for that. It would be an insult to his intellect if he were told that he was to be debarred from discussing this question as a representative of the people. The rights of Western Australia should be placed first, and those of Australia as a whole second; and if Western Australia be called upon to make some small sacrifice for the greater aim in view, of course it may do so. I wish to clearly establish my position in this matter, and I reserve to myself the right to either support the Bill as a whole or to support any amendments for the benefit of Western Australia, which will not hinder federation, but still bring us into union with the other colonies. I will say no more on the Federal Bill except this. There is a rumour or a feeling throughout the colony that the female vote is going to be exercised on the Bill; but I would point out that it is impossible for women to vote on the Bill if we are to deal with it this session, because as soon as we give the ladies of Western Australia a chance to vote, we cease to be an executive body. Parliament has to be dissolved immediately we change the Constitution. I point this out because it is very largely held all round the country that the Government are making preparations whereby votes may be given on the Federal Bill by the ladies of Western

Australia, always so ably championed by the member for East Perth, who I have no doubt wishes them to have a voice in this matter, and I should have no objection to their expression of opinion on it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Bill must go home.

MR. MORAN: The Bill must go home; and I repeat that when we alter the Constitution, we are *non est* as a body. Let it be clearly understood by the country that if the present Parliament is to settle the question, the women cannot have a vote on it. Beyond that, this great question arises. Why should John Jones, who has been forty-seven years in Western Australia, and happens not to be on the roll because he has changed about with regard to residence, not have a voice in saying whether Western Australia should federate or not? Why should the votes of only those who are on the roll be taken? That is a point to be considered. This is a question for the whole of Australia, and not a question of local politics. It may be thought prudent by this House to take only the male adult vote on this question; for if Parliament likes to depart from what the eastern colonies have done, and say that the votes of the whole adult population of the colony, both male and female, shall be taken on this question, such a thing can be done. The referendum has nothing to do with our constitution, and if this Parliament wishes to get the female vote on the federal question, there is a way of doing it: let Parliament declare that the referendum be taken of the adult population, both male and female. This is a big question for us to consider.

THE PREMIER: You must have lists, otherwise some people might vote twice.

MR. MORAN: It is not impossible to get lists prepared and sent round, but that is not the point upon which I am addressing the House: I am speaking of taking the voice of the female population on this question, which could be done without giving women a vote for Parliament. I have no more to say on federation. I want to urge upon the Attorney General to do something in reference to a district court judge for the goldfields. We passed legislation some time ago to enable the Government to appoint a travelling Judge for this work. It has cost the Government tens of thousands

of pounds in witnesses' fees alone, and the lawyers are getting the blame for these costs, but they do not get a penny of the money: it all goes in witnesses' fees. This money is paid away to people who have to come to Perth in connection with various cases, and it is a crying shame that it should be so. I am not blaming the Government altogether, but it is high time the Government took notice of this matter and gave life to the Act which we passed some months ago. Matters like this make the goldfields people restless and irritable; they have a grievance. What are the conditions? We have a beautiful railway with sleeping carriages, splendid hotels at Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, hotels equal to any in Perth, yet rather than send one man on to the goldfields, people have to travel hundreds of miles and it costs thousands of pounds to bring the people to Perth. In New South Wales and Queensland the district court judges have to travel many miles on horseback, in coach, and in many other ways to attend the courts. Although the three Judges which we have cannot do the extra work, it ought not to be impossible to find a member of the bar in Western Australia with sufficient knowledge of mining law to hear cases after they have left the warden's court. May I suggest to the Attorney General that if he be tired of public life at the present time, and if he could—

MR. VOSPER: "If your honour pleases."

MR. MORAN: If "his honour" pleases, and if he cares to follow in the lines of the other colonies and take the privilege which the Attorney General has, we feel sure he will do this work well. With his knowledge of the mining laws of Victoria during the number of years he lived there, and his knowledge of the mining laws of Western Australia, I am sure he would secure justice for us. Then there is the leader of the Opposition, who is a judge in his very appearance: he is "after the manner born," has a judicial mind, and I am perfectly certain would carry on the work which was done so well by his respected father in Western Australia. But we know these two gentlemen are not going to be relegated to positions of this kind: we only wish they would accept such positions. Of course we should be sorry to lose them, but some-

body must take up this work for the peace of the people, and the saving of time and money. I hope the Government will take notice of this matter, and I hope to hear this session from them on this subject. I am going to introduce one more subject to the attention of the House, and it is a subject on which I feel most strongly indeed. We are endeavouring, and are doing a great work, in building up a yeomanry in Western Australia; I believe that during the last two years there has been more land settlement going on in Western Australia than in any other colony; but the best piece of land, and that which could be most easily cleared, is situated between Perth and Geraldton, and does not belong to us. I refer to the Midland Railway Company's land, which is a sore grievance to everyone who has the best interests of the country at heart.

THE PREMIER: The land is not as good as you say.

MR. MORAN: It is good land, and I have taken the opinion of men who make a living on the land. I know that no one in the colony knows the country so well as the Premier does.

THE PREMIER: Some of it is very good land.

MR. MORAN: There is some very good land there. Is there any land in the south-western district as good as the Midland land? It will cost £20 to clear an acre of land in the south-west, while it will only cost 20s. to clear land here. The fact remains that the people want to take this land but cannot. Let me give the House a few facts. This company to build 275 miles of railway line was granted 3,000,000 odd acres of land. Originally the company was supposed to take the land in the usual form for land-grant railways, a block on this side and then a block on the other, leaving blocks between; but what did the company do?

THE PREMIER: They left half the frontage.

MR. MORAN: What did they do? First the contract was altered by which the company took all the land on one side. I am not going to state a case for the company, I am not going to make it any worse or any better than it is—perhaps I might make it a little worse for them if I could. This railway company changed the route of the line, and having taken all the land

on one side, when they came to a place called Dongara they crossed over the line and took all the best land there, and at present there are not five acres of good land left in this place. This company will not let settlement go on to the land: they give no terms at all, only twelve-months terms.

MR. VOSPER: What is the object of that?

MR. MORAN: I will tell you what is the object. The company give you a certain right terminable at a month's notice on either side, which is a disgrace: there is no system of landlordism in the old country which can be compared to that which the Midland Railway Company are endeavouring to establish in Western Australia. The company do not want settlement, but the land is being transferred from one company to another. At present the Midland Railway Company hold 2,000,000 acres of land, and it is being held for one purpose only, so that the company can foist it on to somebody else.

MR. DOHERTY: The company cannot sell it.

MR. MORAN: They can sell it.

MR. DOHERTY: They cannot.

MR. MORAN: If they cannot, that is all the worse. The fact remains that the sons of settlers living along the railway line to-day, I am informed, have endeavoured to get a piece of the land upon which to settle, but these men have not been able to get the land, and now they have to go away to other parts of the country to obtain agricultural land. Young men who have been born in the district are obliged to leave it. The district has a thoroughly reliable rainfall of 16 or 17 inches, which is nearly double the rainfall on some of the best land in Victoria and South Australia, and the land is eminently suited for wheat growing. While we may deal with federation we should not neglect our duty in this House, and if there is any way in which to throw the Midland Company's land open for settlement, we are bound, as guardians of the interests of the people of this country, to do so, at any cost. If a mining company took up a piece of ground on the goldfields and failed to do anything with that land, it would be forfeited without any compunction whatever. The Midland Railway Company are the biggest gambling company in Western Aus-

tralia. We have not only given them 3,000,000 acres of land to build a line 275 miles long, but the land which we have given them at even 5s. per acre would be worth £750,000. It can never be said that we were harsh in our dealings with the company. We guaranteed their bonds, guaranteed them up to half a million of money, and this amount of money would have built the whole of that railway to-day. Will anyone tell me that we could not have built that line to Geraldton for £500,000. I have been along that line and there are no more engineering difficulties along it than there are along the goldfields line. The member for Central Murchison (Mr. Pillingworth) says that the company have spent £600,000 on the line: that is only £100,000 above what I gave them credit for. We owe the company nothing. We have given them the land, and they have gambled with it and they are holding it now to foist it on somebody else, while the country to-day is starving for the want of produce. We cannot grow enough for our own requirements, and yet here is the choicest piece of country in Western Australia blocked up by gamblers and sharks who are trading on the good name of Western Australia! It is time that this came to an end. We find amongst the measures mentioned in the Governor's Speech a land tax: this is a powerful weapon in dealing with such land as that belonging to the Midland Railway Company; and if ever a land tax was justified in the interests of good settlement, it is justified in this case. It may force the company to do something with their land, and the land tax should be placed thick and heavy on that company's land. Before leaving this subject I wish to state that the best thing that can be done for this colony is to vote for clearing out of this country the greatest pack of men who are not honest, and whose intentions are to have a huge gamble and "hang the consequence." That is all I have to say on this question. Finally, I offer my heartiest congratulations to the Government for the most liberal programme ever laid before this House; and I also offer my congratulations to the Opposition, the members of which have always advocated the measures now promised. We are now free to admit that the Government are doing

what any good Government would do, and what the Victorian Government have done, namely, accede to the wishes of the whole of the House, including the Opposition; and, without bringing about any change of the legislative machinery at a period so close to a dissolution, the Government are introducing measures which bring Western Australia at one bound on a level with the most democratic Governments of Australia, and before many other democratic Governments. I offer my heartiest support to the programme set before us, and if ever I felt during the six years I have been in Parliament that I could give a whole-souled support to the Government I feel that I can do so this session. The Government have done good work. They have cut down the expenditure and have endeavoured to meet objections raised by the Opposition, and I offer the Government my support in carrying the grandest programme of legislation ever offered to a liberal Assembly in Australia.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell): I desire to say a few words on the important questions which have been discussed in this debate. First, in regard to the great federation question, it must be very pleasing to hon. members, as it is to myself and others who have given consideration to the subject, that people are now recognising that, however good federation may be for Australia as a whole, the Commonwealth Bill should be discussed, clause by clause, in the interests of the people here. As time goes on, hon. members and the public recognise there are clauses in the Bill which, however good for the other colonies, are infinitely bad for Western Australia. I feel sure we all realise how it is that astute men, who have in the other colonies given this great question study year after year, are only now awakening to the fact that these blemishes exist in the Federal Bill. It is not my design to enter into the details of the measure. Hon. members in this House and throughout the country have ventured to point out in plain terms the blots that exist in the Bill, and how fatal it would be to the best interests of Western Australia were these blots in the measure not removed before we enter into this solemn contract. I am second to none in my desire for a united Australia.

I hope to see, even in my time, federation an accomplished fact, and I desire to point out that when we grow wildly patriotic over the cry for a united Australia we are apt to forget that a share of patriotism is due to the country in which we live and move and have our being. There are gentlemen in this House who have in unmistakable language pointed out the great blemishes in the Federal Bill, but there are others who, although they attended the Conventions, have not had the moral courage to do this. I rejoice that my friend the Premier is not amongst the latter. He has given keen study to the question for years, and he is manly and frank enough to admit that federation on the lines proposed in the Bill would not only disorganise his fiscal policy but be fatal to other interests. Never has there been a time in the history of Western Australia when the best interests of the colony more demanded that we should be altogether unhampered in our fiscal policy, unhampered in our public works policy, our railway policy, and in our freedom to develop our resources. The Bill, as now drawn, would have just the opposite effect, because it would disorganise our fiscal policy and hamper our railway policy, while taking away from us the privilege the other colonies have possessed for many years of building up their resources, and would hand us over bound hand and foot to the tender mercies of those other States. I am very much in earnest in this question, not only as one who has foreseen from the beginning the results which I have indicated, but as a Minister and a member of Parliament, and as a colonist who has a great stake in and a great love for Western Australia. I feel sure that hon. members like the member for East Perth (Mr. James) are moved by the highest motives in the action they are taking, but I would ask what is the colony to lose by waiting a while? If it be true that there are blots in the Bill and that we are the trustees for the people in this matter, what in the name of common sense is to prevent our waiting a while? Without going into detail, it seems to me that the only sensible course is not to move amendments in this House, but to wait until the other colonies have federated and a Commonwealth Parliament has been called into working order with power

to deal with our representations. If their Parliament refuse to deal with our representations and do penalise this colony—if their Parliament do not offer us the same privileges as if we had entered as an original State, they will not be doing justice to the federal principle, and assuredly not doing justice to the great colony of Western Australia. When I look back—and it takes an old West Australian to realise this—to the condition of Western Australia nine years ago, I can only say that the progress has been simply magnificent. Nine years ago there was a population of under 50,000, with possibly less than 8,000 adult workers. At that time a body of men, purely Western Australian, took up the reins of office. Then Western Australia was under a cloud and was regarded as the Cinderella of the group; but these men, without any experience of great affairs, accepted the responsibility of developing the latent resources of Western Australia. And what has been the result? With no previous experience, this body of men, with the present Premier at their head, had the courage to embark on a developing and borrowing policy, which has lifted the colony out of the "Slough of Despond" and made our name known, not only throughout Australia, but throughout the whole world. I now wish to refer to the proposed railway legislation. There are hon. members who seem to have doubts as to the wisdom of the policy of embarking on the construction of fresh railways and new public works. I make these remarks only with the desire to inspire hon. members with confidence; and when they reflect on the results of the past nine years' work, it should give them courage to indorse the future policy of the Government. In dealing with this railway question I ask myself whether our resources are worth opening up and developing; and that is a question which hon. members can also ask themselves. I also ask myself whether there is really a payable gold-field at Leonora and other places proposed to be tapped by these railways. Further, I ask whether private enterprise has had the boldness to invest large sums of money in this colony. If hon. members answer these questions in the affirmative, then I say it is our bounden duty to extend our railway

system to these centres which need communication. Hon. members talk of cheapening the cost of living in Western Australia, but what about cheapening the cost of living to those people who have gone to isolated places in this colony, and are opening up our latent resources? What about cheapening the cost of the machinery required in those places, and what about reducing the cost of living to the toiler who is taxed a penny in a pound on flour, and also on every necessary of life? The toilers in Leonora and other places of the kind ought to be considered, as well as the artizans of Perth, or people who are served by the railway at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. When members think of the amount of taxation that is reduced by extending the railway system to such places as I have mentioned, and compare that reduction with the wiping away of the food duties, I am sure they will see that the policy of the Government is a sound one, and the only policy that an honourable Parliament and sensible people would indorse. The same remarks apply to our timber resources. Who will say that a railway is not necessary to encourage the investment of capital in realising the wealth of our 6,000,000 acres of jarrah and karri forest? Is there a sensible man who will say that the Government should hesitate to extend the railway system to our agricultural areas when we have proved that the areas exist, and that there is a demand for such land? If these questions are answered in the affirmative, we should be worse than cowards to hesitate in developing the heritage that is placed in our hands, when £11,000,000 has already been spent in that work. We talk of taxing posterity; but what will be found at the maturity of these loans? It will be found that stored up in London, under a wise provision, there is a sinking fund that will enable posterity to discharge the debts we are now incurring. I am not so young as some hon. members, but I can assure the House that I feel filled with enthusiasm at the great possibilities before this country; and I wonder at brainy, keen men I meet, men who know how to get on in the world, hesitating to indorse the only policy that this colony ought to adopt at the present time. I need not say more on the questions embraced in

His Excellency's Speech. I can only hope that, when the railway proposals come before Parliament, there will be an unanimous opinion in their favour in both Houses, and that it will be shown unmistakably, whatever quarrels there may have been in the past, that those quarrels have all been forgotten, and that a railway policy is the policy of the country. The Government in these matters do not work by rule of thumb. I have authentic information, not only from men in this House who have embarked their capital, but also from people outside; and the Premier, following up his great idea of knowing exactly what he is about, has been in every centre, and satisfied himself that the enterprises there were worthy the public expenditure. The question has been raised whether federation ought to be a party matter, and I desire to put myself straight with the House. Thirteen or fourteen months ago the Premier assured me that this would not be a party question. Members must recognise that in my action on the Bill I knew I was free, even to oppose the Premier; and, if it had been necessary, I should have resigned my seat and opposed him. If there was any one man I feared—no, not feared, but feared for—it was the Premier of Western Australia. I did not know how he would act when he came from the other colonies, full to the brim with his "one people one destiny" enthusiasm. I am glad to say we have got past that stage. He is true to himself, true to his instincts, true to his colony. He has been man enough, brave enough, to say, "The Bill is not all I took it to be: let my country be first; and, having made a good bargain for my country, then I will keep my promise to the Premiers across the water, and will do my best to bring about what we all desire—a federated Australia."

THE PREMIER: (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I think it was a good thing that my friend, the member for West Perth (Mr. Wood), adjourned the debate the other evening, because the adjournment has afforded more time to hon. members, and has resulted in some excellent contributions to the debate on the Address-in-Reply. I listened with much pleasure to many of the speeches this evening; and I think that we all will go away feeling better for having had this

opportunity. I desire first of all to congratulate you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the position you now occupy in the absence of our old and esteemed friend, Sir James Lee Steere. We are glad to see one who is so much esteemed in the colony, both in his private capacity and as a member of Parliament, occupying, during the temporary absence of the Speaker, the Chair of this House. [Several MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] And I am sure you may rely upon receiving from every hon. member all the assistance and all the courtesy to which you, both as a private gentleman and as Deputy Speaker of this House, are entitled. I desire also to thank hon. members generally for the way in which they have been good enough to criticise the programme prepared by the Government and set forth in the Governor's Speech. I cannot but feel grateful to those hon. members who have for so many years supported the Government which I represent in this House; and I fully realise what was said by the member for West Perth (Mr. Wood), that it is an arduous duty to support the same Government year after year, feeling perhaps that the Government really have the best of the bargain. However, I can only say that my thanks are due to those hon. members who have for so long a time accorded their undivided assistance to the Government in carrying on the business of the country; and I am sure I desire to thank some hon. members opposite—I should like to say all, but I think I ought not to exaggerate on this occasion—I desire to thank especially my friend the member for North Murchison (Mr. Kenny), for the very generous speech with which he favoured the House this evening. Altogether, I think I may say I am pleased indeed with the reception that the programme of the Government has had at the hands of hon. members. One somewhat humiliating incident has happened during this session; that is the secession of so many members from this side of the House to the other. One cannot but feel somewhat regretful when gentlemen who have long accorded a liberal support to a party, find it necessary to sever their connection with it, whether the movement may proceed from the Opposition benches or from the Government side of the House. I can only

say that, as far as I am concerned, I feel that I have given no occasion whatever for those hon. members to leave the Government benches. The reasons given by some of them seem to me altogether inadequate; and it would have been much better had they given no reasons at all. To give as a reason the statement that some little thing had not been done, that some transaction in the Mines Department was not satisfactory, that some buildings on a railway were not as they ought to be, that the houses erected by the Government for men working on the permanent way were too good and too comfortable, and that tents ought to be sufficient—it seems to me that reasons like those, which have nothing whatever to do with the general administration of the colony, but have reference to departmental incidents which will occur in every country, are most unsatisfactory and unconvincing. It does not matter how perfect the machinery of a Government may be, there will be always some cause for complaint in regard to matters of that kind. The granting of four batteries in the district of one hon. member, with the fact that they did not work satisfactorily, has been given by that member as a reason for his going to sit with the Opposition. Four batteries out of nine in the whole colony seem to have been granted to that hon. member's district.

MR. KENNY: The grant was too much for him.

THE PREMIER: Perhaps it was, but at any rate they were no doubt put there by the department because they were supposed to be required in that district. I have no doubt they were required there; but the fact that they did not work successfully from the start, that water was difficult to obtain, that some machinery broke down, and that other accidents occurred which delayed the progress of the batteries, seems also to have been magnified into a grievance by the member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory). However, while I regret that any hon. gentlemen should leave this side of the House in order to take up positions on the other, I can only say that we on this side must try to survive the shock.

MR. LEAKE: The hon. member you refer to says he is going to vote with you still.

THE PREMIER: Do they?

MR. LEAKE: No, not "they." He does—the member for North Coolgardie.

THE PREMIER: Well, if that is so, perhaps there will not be much difference. At any rate, as my friend the member for West Perth has said, we know where we are now: we have got down to what we may term "bed rock." We have, I believe, a very solid party, and I do not think we will have so many adverse motions moved on this side of the House as were customary during last session. At that time it seemed that we had far more to fear from our supporters than from the adversary. I think we on this side prefer to have the shots fired by the hon. member opposite (Mr. Leake), rather than by members sitting on this side of the House. The best part of the discussion, and also the most important part, has been in regard to the subject of federation; but hon. members who support federation seem to be in a terrible hurry about sending it to the vote of the people. [MR. MITCHELL: Hear, hear.] Especially is this the case with those members who are altogether satisfied with the present Federal Bill, whom I may properly term "federationists at any price."

MR. JAMES: "Federationists on the terms of the Bill." Use the exact phrase.

THE PREMIER: Yes; federationists on the terms of the Bill. They seem to be in a terrible hurry lest those who do not think with them altogether, or who perhaps do not think with them at all, should have as much to say in regard to this measure as they themselves have had to say about it. I regret to say that there has been an attempt on the part of the Opposition—I do not for a moment believe that the majority of the Opposition were in favour of it, but still there has been an attempt, and I think no one can deny that—to bring this great question of federation into the arena of party politics. In fact the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson), if he is reported correctly in one of this morning's papers, and if he is not I shall of course at once withdraw the statement, said at Geraldton, a day or two ago, that federation was a party question.

MR. WILSON: No; most decidedly I did not say that.

THE PREMIER: Then the hon. member is wrongly reported in this morning's paper, where that statement is made. It seemed to me that the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), on the other hand, said at the same meeting that it was not a party question.

MR. LEAKE: I think what was said was that the Government had made it a party question.

THE PREMIER: Well, the hon. member was incorrectly reported, so I will withdraw that statement; but there can be no doubt that the general feeling on the part of the Opposition is that this question should not be made a party question; and that is also the feeling on this side of the House. I have four colleagues in this House, and they will assure you, and bear me out in saying, that I have scarcely ever spoken to them on the subject of federation, except to say that it was a matter on which they should judge for themselves. We have never made it a party question, and we have never made it even a Government question. We have always understood that it was not to be so made; and in this respect we followed the example of all the other colonies, as far as I know. There have been times in the other colonies when those Governments have made federation a question on which they staked their existence; but they have never made it a party question, and the fact that we found Mr. Reid in New South Wales supported by the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barton), all through the recent federal campaign, is surely evidence that party politics were not allowed in New South Wales to intrude into this great question of federation.

MR. LEAKE: Yes; but you do not even let it become a public question.

THE PREMIER: It has been said by hon. members who desire that this Bill shall go to the people, that this Bill and no other Bill should at once be sent to the people.

MR. OLDHAM: It is your Bill.

THE PREMIER: I do not know that the hon. member is quite accurate in that statement. I certainly was one of about sixty or seventy who took part in framing that Bill. If the hon. member will take the trouble to look at the reports of those Conventions, he will find that

on nearly all the important points I was in the minority.

MR. OLDHAM: Yes, but you were one of five with the other Premiers.

THE PREMIER: I was in a minority there also.

MR. OLDHAM: You signed your name to the amended Bill, at any rate.

THE PREMIER: Well, I did; I admit that.

MR. JAMES: Do not go back on your "pals."

THE PREMIER: I am not going back; but I will have something to say presently which will make you go back a bit. The two hon. members opposite (Mr. Leake and Mr. Wilson) have just returned from a trip to Geraldton, where they have been supporting a gentleman who is a great federationist; who also has been a member of this House, and hopes to be a member again. They went to support that gentleman, who is an ardent federationist—about the same kind of federationist, I think, as the member for East Perth (Mr. James). When that gentleman (Mr. Simpson) came before the electors of Geraldton, he seemed to be not so much in favour of the present Bill as he had formerly expressed himself. I thought of him, and many others no doubt did, as being in favour of it; but he, who is probably one of the greatest federationists in the colony—as I said a moment ago, exactly like the member for East Perth—formulated a plan and placed it before the electors, and in this, at any rate, he received the most cordial support of the two hon. members opposite (Mr. Leake and Mr. Wilson), who travelled all the way to Geraldton to support him. He said the matter should be sent to the people now on the abstract question whether we should federate at all; that after their decision there should be a dissolution of Parliament, succeeded, of course, by a general election; that, after this, a new Bill should be formulated suitable to the requirements of this colony—we were to try our hand at making a Federal Bill, in fact; lastly, and after all these steps, we were to have another referendum. But it seems to me that if the candidate wished to mystify the people of Geraldton as to what he intended, or what were his wishes with regard to federation, he could not have

gone a better way about it than by placing these proposals before them. I wonder when he would have got the last referendum. First of all there was, I repeat, to be a referendum; then a general election; then a new Bill, suitable to the interests of the colony; and, lastly, another referendum. I would like to ask the two hon. members opposite (Mr. Leake and Mr. Wilson), are they in accord with that hon. member who, we know, has been their Mentor for many a day? Are they in accord with the views expressed by him at Geraldton? The member for Albany has asked me a good many questions, very pointed ones, when he got the chance; and now I ask him this question: Is he in favour of this programme put forward by our friend, the late member for Geraldton?

MR. LEAKE: I have recorded my vote in favour of Mr. Simpson.

THE PREMIER: Well, I take it the hon. member is in favour of this programme, though I do not mean to say that follows. I only wish to point out how soon a man changes his views, when he goes before his electors and finds their opinions are not in accord with those which he has expressed. I expect to find the member for East Perth with a programme of this sort, if he happens to go to East Perth: a referendum on the abstract question, firstly; then a dissolution, then a general election, then a new Bill altogether on our own account, and finally another referendum!

MR. JAMES: What about the somersault on the Redistribution of Seats Bill?

THE PREMIER: The candidate (Mr. Simpson) was very much in favour of this Bill, and of the great Australian federation—a great nation, one people, one destiny; but at Geraldton he seems to have turned a somersault, and he has told the people there that the financial clauses are defective.

MR. OLDHAM: That is what you say.

THE PREMIER: I am not stating what I say, but am talking about what other people say at this moment. Mr. Simpson said the financial clauses were defective. A great change seems to have come over the dream of that gentleman, and I should not be at all surprised if a great change also came over the views of the member for East Perth. People who

get so enthusiastic and go away into the clouds, like the member for East Perth, cannot generally stick to their guns when opposition comes. There is no doubt that in the Conventions which we attended in Adelaide, Sydney, and Melbourne, we were over-weighted; for we had not men of the same experience in public life, the same knowledge of the subject, as most of the other colonies. I am not going to shirk the saying of what I think because it is rather unpleasant to say it, and I assert that I am afraid many delegates who went from this colony did not realise sufficiently the great responsibility that rested on them.

Several MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

THE PREMIER: It was, however, thoroughly understood before we went that the conclusions arrived at would not be binding upon this Parliament. If any one will take the trouble to look at the Enabling Act under which delegates were appointed here, he will see it clearly says that the results of the Convention were to be submitted to Parliament, and, if approved by Parliament, the Bill was to be submitted to the electors.

MR. OLDHAM: It was the same in the other colonies.

THE PREMIER: It was more distinctly stated in our case than in the others. Our Act said, "if approved by Parliament," showing that the House here was very explicit with regard to that; and I am sure it never entered the minds of many of the delegates who were present at the Conventions that the deliberations of those Conventions were to be final, or in any way binding upon the Parliament of this country. We knew very well—at least I knew, and I have no doubt every other delegate knew—that the Bill we were sent there to assist in framing was to be submitted for approval to the Parliament of the colony. The member for East Perth (Mr. James) has given us a good long speech this evening; but for the life of me I do not remember what he said, and I do not believe any one else can. He spoke a lot, but it was in generalities. He did not come to facts. He talked about sending the Bill to the people, and of his great belief in the Bill; but he did not go into detail in regard to the measure.

MR. JAMES: I said it was not the proper time now to do that.

THE PREMIER: When the hon. member had an opportunity, which perhaps he will never again have in his life, of serving this country in those three Conventions in Adelaide, Sydney, and Melbourne, he did not take a scintilla of the interest he has now exhibited in federation. He sat there for four months—at any rate, he ought to have sat there, but I should not say he did, for I think he was in his place only a very little time—and he spoke three times. I say this from memory, and if I am wrong the hon. member will correct me.

MR. JAMES: I spoke only twice; so, there!

THE PREMIER: Twice! Well, I think he has spoken two hundred times in Perth. He says he spoke only twice at the Conventions, but I gave him credit for three times.

MR. JAMES: How many times did you speak?

THE PREMIER: A hundred, I believe.

MR. JAMES: Ninety-nine times too many.

THE PREMIER: I did my best, and I do not think you did your best.

MR. JAMES: I kept silence, so that I could hear better men, which you ought to have done.

THE PREMIER: You never helped, and never expressed an opinion in Melbourne, at the last Convention, as to whether the Bill was suitable to this colony or not. In Sydney you did. You made a speech which the member for Northam (Hon. G. Throssell) might have made.

MR. JAMES: Why did you not back it up?

THE PREMIER: Because I did not want to.

MR. JAMES: There was too much of you and Hackett about the Convention.

THE PREMIER: Supposing I did not back it up, that is no reason why you should go away from your colours.

MR. JAMES: I did not go away from them.

THE PREMIER: Why did you go away from that speech? You would like to forget it; but plain type brings it back before you, and shows how inconsistent your action was afterwards.

MR. JAMES: What about the resolutions at the Premiers' Conference?

MR. WILSON (to the Premier): Have you not hauled down your colours?

THE PREMIER: I would like to know when the member for East Perth arrived at the views he expresses so definitely.

MR. JAMES: Ever since I went to the Convention.

THE PREMIER: If you had only given a little better assistance to me and others who were trying to do their best at that time, it would have been much more to your credit than it was to go to that Convention in Melbourne and be away from it nearly the whole time, shirking the divisions, and taking no part in the debates. Certainly, it was a picnic for you.

MR. JAMES: You got all your views from Mr. Hackett.

THE PREMIER: I am going to tell the truth.

MR. JAMES: I admit you are trying to, but you are not doing so.

THE PREMIER: Were you there often?

MR. JAMES: Very often. I was present at every important division.

THE PREMIER: On that great occasion, when the hon. member had all those opportunities of placing before the members of the Convention his opinions, and trying to do his best for this country, he did nothing, and I am glad now to have the opportunity of telling him so.

MR. JAMES: What did you do?

THE PREMIER: I did my best.

MR. OLDHAM: You made a mess of it.

THE PREMIER: I was there every day, and I do not think I missed one division—indeed, I am sure I did not miss a division; and I was there continually trying to do my best, which you (Mr. James) certainly were not.

MR. LEAKE: Oh, yes.

THE PREMIER: No. I am sorry to speak of the hon. member in this way, because I admit he generally is very plausible, and I am sure he desires to be courteous to every one; but I am not going to let him sail under false colours. I am going to point out that, when he had the opportunity of fighting for this colony and assisting those who were sent there, he failed in his duty, in my opinion.

MR. JAMES: I was the only one to do it in Sydney, and you cannot deny it.

THE PREMIER: You made one speech, and you have altogether deserted that speech.

MR. JAMES: I stood up for the country. We will see what you did, when I get the chance.

THE PREMIER: I am afraid that a little political notoriety seems to be more important to him than looking after the interests of this country.

MR. JAMES: I am not so fond of chicken and champagne as you.

THE PREMIER: That was all very well, and not so bad either.

MR. JAMES: But the country has to pay for it; that is the worst of it.

THE PREMIER: I think I had better leave the hon. member alone now: I have said enough with regard to him. I only hope he will remember these things.

MR. JAMES: I do not forget the position.

THE PREMIER: I think you have forgotten a good deal, or else you would not have left me to remember it. I very much regret having had to take this course with regard to the hon. member's action in relation to the Convention; but I say deliberately, without any fear, that he neglected his duty.

MR. LEAKE: It is not fair.

MR. JAMES: Assuming I did, how does that affect the question before the House? It is a cowardly attack.

THE PREMIER: But it is true.

MR. JAMES: I will have my say about you afterwards.

THE PREMIER: I leave the hon. member to do what he likes. He cannot say anything about me. He knows I tried to do my duty.

MR. JAMES: I have made you squirm many a time, and I will do it again.

THE PREMIER: I think when the hon. member goes again as a delegate he will be more regardful, perhaps, of the interests he is sent to serve. There is a matter which has already been pointed out by the member for East Coolgardie. If we are to amend this Bill—and there is not the slightest doubt the House has complete power to do it—what will be the use of submitting it to the vote of the people, unless we have the concurrence of the other colonies in the amendments we desire to make? It seems to me that, if we were to amend the Bill in a way the other colonies would not acquiesce in, it

would only be a waste of time and a loss of energy in submitting it to the vote of the people, or in fact to the vote of anyone else. If this Bill is not such as Parliament can approve of, there can be no doubt whatever that this House and the other place will say so. It is not for a moment to be supposed that the Bill, for the first time presented in its present shape before the Parliament of the country, is to be swallowed holus-bolus, unless a majority of this House approve of it. If the members of this House were to accept the Bill, simply because it had been passed by legislators in the other colonies, assisted by members here and contrary to their own judgment, they would be altogether abrogating the functions of Parliament, and acting disloyally to the people who sent them here.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Did you not pledge yourself to bring the Bill before Parliament?

THE PREMIER: You can read for yourself what I said, and you can understand English as well as I can. It was never intended, and never could have been intended—nothing so foolish could have ever been supposed that this Bill was to be binding on this Parliament.

MR. LEAKE: No one has ever contended that.

THE PREMIER: That is all right. I am speaking now as one who desires to uphold the rights of this Parliament. This House has absolute power to pass the Bill and send it to the people, or it has the right to send the Bill to the people with amendments; but if the House sends the Bill to the people with amendments, we must bear in mind that, if the amendments are not acquiesced in by the other Parliaments, our work will have been of no avail. Once having passed the amendments, it might be an inducement for the other Parliaments to accept them. If this House, in its judgment, is of opinion that this Bill with amendments is likely to be acquiesced in after we pass this Bill with these amendments, that may be a very good lever to induce the other colonies to ask the Imperial Parliament to make provision in the Imperial Enabling Act to make special conditions for Western Australia. That is quite possible, and if the securities were not too great, or the alterations were not too many, I think it would not be too unrea-

sonable to expect, so long as the alterations would not unduly interfere with the Bill as it affected other places, and we only altered it so as to affect ourselves, that there would be a disposition to acquiesce if it were possible for them to do so. Therefore, there would be a disposition to get Western Australia into the federation. I told Mr. Reid that the glory of federation would be greatly marred, and a great part of the work would be left undone, if one-third of Australia were not included in federated Australia. If this House amended the Bill, the amendments would have to be submitted to the Parliament of each of the other colonies, and it might be seen that as these amendments would not interfere with the colonies, and would only affect us, if the other colonies did not agree to the amendments, then this colony might stop out of federation altogether; therefore, perhaps the other colonies would be in a worse position, not having the whole of Australia federated, and there would be a disposition on the part of the other colonies to try and meet our wishes as far as possible, especially if our desires were well grounded, reasonable, and proved to be of a very important and urgent character.

MR. VOSPER: Would it not be better to put the amendments definitely before the people?

THE PREMIER: That might be done, but if it were done, probably it would be irrevocable, and we could not amend the Commonwealth Bill at all. Probably the other colonies might be willing to accept some of our amendments and not all. Supposing this House amended the Commonwealth Bill, we might get nearly all our amendments, whereas if there was a confirmation of the amendments by the people, there might be a difficulty in altering the Bill; but that is a detail which we can consider. In order that the Bill should be in the hands of hon. members I am having it prepared; and I am only waiting for the Bills from Queensland and Victoria to see the shape in which those Bills were placed before the Parliaments in those colonies, before submitting the Bill here. I have the Bill from New South Wales, and the other Bills will be here on Monday. As soon as I receive them, a Bill will be laid on the table of the House in the shape in

which it was amended at the Conference of Premiers, and I will before that time, during this week I hope, place some papers on the table with regard to the financial position of Western Australia under the Bill, from our Government Actuary, who is making an exhaustive inquiry as to how this colony will be affected by the Bill. I believe these papers are with the printer now, and if that is so, perhaps to-morrow or the next day, at any rate as soon as I get them, I will be able to place these facts before hon. members. Also I have some further information from New South Wales, from the Actuary there, but I am not in a position yet to place it on the table for the information of hon. members, because I have not obtained consent to do so. As soon as the Bill is in print, which will be in a few days, it will be placed by me on the table of the House, and it will then be competent for Parliament to deal with it. My idea is that as soon as the Bill is on the table the best course to pursue, and one that ought to give general satisfaction and would most likely lead to satisfactory results, would be to refer the Bill to a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament. The selection of members would be a matter of arrangement. Of course the members could be balloted for, but we would be able to select the best men for this particular work, because it is a non-party matter and we should be enabled to select those who know most about the measure, and those who are likely to take an interest in or have qualifications for investigating the financial clauses. That is the principal matter we have to consider, whether the financial clauses are satisfactory to us, or will bring disaster upon us. Of course there are other questions, such as intercommunication between this and the other colonies, and the alteration of some clauses prohibiting railways from being built through another colony.

MR. VOSPER: And the control of our own railways.

THE PREMIER: Yes, there is the question dealt with in Clause 97, as to the control of our own railways. These are questions I think we could deal with almost in our own House, but they are matters which can be dealt with by the committee. I think it would be better

to defer the discussion of the Bill until we get the report of the Joint Committee. I do not think the committee would take long, and I am quite willing the time should be limited, say not to exceed the first week in September, for bringing up the report. This is an idea which occurs to me, but I am not particularly wedded to it, and I am willing to fall in with the views of hon. members in regard to the matter. All of us must admit that the question of federation has been discussed less by the people of this colony than by those of any other colony. In the other colonies the people have been talking about federation for years past. In New South Wales the question has been discussed at several general elections; but in this colony the people have not had the matter brought home to them, and conclusions may be founded on self-interests that may be disputed if the matter is thoroughly understood. I do not see any better way of educating the people than by publishing the views of responsible persons, actuaries and others, especially the report of a Joint Select Committee of Parliament. I think we should be taking a course that would meet with public approval, in doing this. I am of opinion that before this matter is sent to the people the Bill should be perfectly understood. We know the difficulties that all of us have had in understanding this question. Every day we see light where there was darkness before, and those who have studied the Bill over and over again every day, come to the knowledge that they see things differently from what they saw before. If that is the case with us, how much more so must it be with the ordinary voter; and the only way is to give him an opportunity of understanding the subject by placing matters before him in as short a way as possible. That is the best course to pursue. If this falls in with the views of hon. members, I shall be willing to carry out the plan. We want more light on the question, and hon. members in this House, and others taking an interest in the matter, if they can suggest any means of bringing the matter before the public, their suggestions will have my best attention. With all the knowledge I have of the Bill, having heard it discussed at four Conventions now, I ought to know a little about it if I am not

quick at grasping matters; still there are many parts of the Bill which give me difficulty, especially the financial clauses, because I see clearly that this colony cannot afford to lose a lot of money. It is easy to say, as the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) said, that we will not lose much, or that we shall not lose eventually. The impression in my mind is that he said we might lose in the beginning, but there would be no permanent loss. We cannot afford to lose at the beginning. We want all we have got, to do justice to the requirements of the colony. I know the views of some hon. members are that the Bill is everything that we could desire. I think that is going too far. The hon. member for East Perth never tells us of any defects he sees in the Bill; and, apparently, he sees nothing but good in the measure. But there are difficulties; and there is not a single actuary in all Australia who, writing on the subject, has not pointed out great difficulties in regard to Western Australia. That was admitted at all the Conventions, where we were told that this colony had an abnormal condition of affairs, and that it was really no use trying to deal with Western Australia on the same terms as with the other colonies. On this point I remember Sir Philip Fysh, during one of the debates, saying "Of course Western Australia cannot join federation, we know; her conditions are so abnormal"; and when all the statisticians and financiers say the same thing, there must be some truth in the statement, and it cannot be all plain sailing in regard to the requirements of this colony. The member for Albany (Mr. Leake) is another gentleman who, I believe, regards the Bill as perfect; at any rate, he never says anything about the defects in the Bill. When I was trying my best in Melbourne to get terms for this colony, and pointing out the difficulties we were in, the member for Albany did not agree with me, but said this colony was so rich that we could afford to lose something, and that no special terms were required. The proposal then before the Convention on this point—not the proposal which subsequently found a place in the Bill—was that a certain amount of revenue from customs should be guaranteed this colony. When I said I did not want Western Australia to be specially named, although

this colony would, no doubt, get the benefit of such a proposal, and that the clause ought to apply to any colony which might be in a similar position, what I meant was that any colony so circumstanced should have a certain revenue from customs guaranteed. But the member for Albany did not agree with me, and urged that the proposal was conceived in generosity, and ought to be accepted with gratitude. That was the way the hon. member acted, although the Bill had been framed by the other colonies to suit their own requirements, and in nearly all the divisions on important clauses the voting had gone against my proposals; and, in spite of these defeats in the Convention, the hon. member would have had me return to Western Australia and say that everything was as it ought to be. My own opinion is that the Bill needs closely looking into, because there are a lot of blots in the measure, and I am very much afraid that the financial clauses will require amendment before we can safely accept them.

MR. LEAKE: Our finances have undergone a change since then.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member is quite right there.

MR. LEAKE: And that makes a difference.

THE PREMIER: I knew more about the finances of the country than the hon. member did at that time, and was in a better position to deal with the question. There is no doubt that the finances then were—

A MEMBER: Buoyant.

THE PREMIER: They were in a better condition than now, though not in such a good condition as they had been: they were declining, and I knew it. The financial condition of this colony was one which gave me anxiety at the time, but that condition might not have been known to the hon. member, who, while doing his best for the colony, said we were so rich that we could afford to lose, and give to other colonies not so well circumstanced.

MR. LEAKE: That was rather by way of argument, I think.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member and myself were then in the same boat.

MR. VOSPER: But pulling in different directions.

THE PREMIER: Yes. The hon. member was good enough to say then that, because we were divided in opinion in Western Australia, there was no reason why we should be divided at the Convention; and his opinion was that the proposal should be accepted with gratitude. An alteration was made, however, and the scheme drawn as now was put in the Bill. And even on that point I did not know until very recently that the duties had to be reimposed—which would be a difficult operation—but always thought the present tariff would go on, because people are more inclined to leave duties as they are rather than reimpose them. I do not know whether this is a point which occurred to the member for Albany, but my idea was that our present tariff would remain for five years under the Bill. Now, however, we find that is not the case. I do not think I need say anything more. If the views I have expressed meet with approval, in a very few days I will put the Bill on the table and move that it be referred to a Select Committee of both Houses, and it will be our duty to select as members of that committee men who will best deal with the important financial clauses of the Bill. As to the other parts of the measure, they are not complicated, and the House as a whole can deal with them without reference to a committee. The question of an intercolonial railway and that of federal railways through a State, and even the question of the control of the railways, might be dealt with by the House with the aid of the leader of the Opposition, who has legal knowledge. The question of finance, however, is a different matter, and requires very close and serious attention.

MR. LEAKE: Are you referring to the draft Commonwealth Bill or the Enabling Bill?

THE PREMIER: The Commonwealth Bill will be one of the schedules to the Enabling Bill, which will be in the same shape, or almost in the same shape, as the New South Wales Bill. The question of how the vote shall be taken will have to be considered; whether it shall be on adult suffrage or confined to men.

MR. VOSPER: It may be voted on by all the men of the colony.

THE PREMIER: The member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) is quite right. We can take any course we like on this point, and need not refer at all to the electoral roll. The Enabling Bill can provide that every man and woman in the colony shall have a vote.

MR. LEAKE: We will render you every assistance from this side of the House in discussing the Enabling Bill.

THE PREMIER: The Enabling Bill is a very short and simple one.

MR. VOSPER: It is an important one.

THE PREMIER: The terms may be important, but what I suggest is that before we discuss the Bill we should appoint the Select Committee I have mentioned, and if hon. members agree with me, the House could go on with other important business while the committee were considering the federal measure, and so no delay be caused. That is all I desire to say at present. We have a great deal of work before us. All the promised Bills—which seem to meet with so much approval from hon. members, but in regard to which some think the Government are only making a show and are not serious—will, with very few exceptions, be laid on the table shortly. There is no legislation promised that has not received attention, and almost every Bill mentioned in the Speech is in print and has been revised several times. We have commenced a new session, which will be the last one of this Parliament, because the Redistribution of Seats Bill will result in a general election; and it will be just as well if we pass as many good Bills as possible during the next few months. We have had a trial of strength already and we may have another before the close of the session; and I do not regret this trial of strength at the commencement, because it shows that the Government have a very good majority, a majority which I do not think will be much lessened during the session. Probably the trial of strength will do a great deal of good in clearing the air, and although it has possibly caused some delay now, it may really prove a saving of time in the end.

MR. LEAKE: The Opposition have got what they demanded.

THE PREMIER: I am very glad to hear that.

MR. LEAKE: Then we are all pleased.

THE PREMIER : My own desire is to work most amicably with the Opposition, and to assist them with measures they may desire. We have had one fight and we may have another; but, the fighting over, we can combine and work together for the good of the country. Our duty in dealing with the federal question is to consider this colony first: in that I quite agree with the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran). This is the home of most of us, and those who may not have been here long will, the majority of them, spend their lives here. No doubt people do come here with the idea of only staying awhile and then returning to their homes elsewhere; but how many do return? Not one in a thousand; and in this they are like the early colonists who came out from England with the idea of returning home in a few years, but really made their permanent home here. There will be good fortune I hope for most of the people who have come to this colony, which is a colony with great possibilities before it. The old colonists here who have succeeded have been the architects of their own fortunes, and now we are all trying to do the best we can for ourselves and the colony. We are all, I am sure, determined to protect the interests of Western Australia, while at the same time desirous of helping forward federation. Most of us have looked forward all our lives to a union of the Australian colonies, and I should be very sorry indeed, whether I look at the question from a personal standpoint or from a political standpoint, if this should prove the only colony left out of the great movement. Yet I owe a greater debt to Western Australia than to the rest of Australia; and I can say I love Western Australia better than I do any other part of the world, and I am not going to sacrifice her interests for the sake of sentiment. I must be assured that federation is to the interests of this colony before we join, and that we are not going to lose much. I do not care whether under federation we make much or little, and I do not want it shown that federation will pay us, but I do want it shown that we shall not lose by union, and if I am shown that I shall be satisfied. There is not a single other colony in Australia which does not hope to make a good deal out of federation. South Australia is longing for free markets for

her wine and corn, and all kinds of agricultural produce, because producers there can more than supply the wants of their own people. The duties in Victoria restrict the market there, and South Australian wine is almost prohibited from the other colonies, even from New South Wales where free-trade does not apply to wine, which is the article South Australia is most desirous of a market for. In fact, South Australia is languishing for want of free markets, and it would be a great help to her to be federated, with inter-colonial free-trade. The same remarks apply to Victoria, where industries are languishing and everything, including labour, is cheap. Some stone-cutters told me the other day that men of their trade in Victoria were receiving just half the wage paid in Western Australia; and they stated—I have no doubt they are all free-traders, too—that twenty per cent. was not a high enough duty, with the freight added, to enable them to compete here with what they termed the cheap labour of Victoria. Well, that is the state of affairs in Victoria. Wages are low, and manufactures are languishing. The Victorian people want free markets all over Australia, not only for their manufactures, but also for their other products, their wine and corn, for all those things which that colony can so well produce. And then we have New South Wales. The farmers of New South Wales have been for a number of years under a great disability, in that they have to pay duty on everything they send to Victoria, while Victoria can send its products free into New South Wales. Is it a strange thing that the people of Riverina and other parts of New South Wales should desire federation, so that they may send their cattle and other products into Victoria free of duty? Their produce when sent to Victoria is taxed, while the Victorian produce enters New South Wales free.

MR. VOSPER : They comprised three-fourths of the New South Wales majority in favour of federation.

THE PREMIER : Can you wonder at it? It does not require thinking out. Their material interests were at stake. In Victoria there is a tax of a shilling on every imported sheep: the Riverina people do not want to pay that shilling. Who would not vote for federation if, by so doing, he could send his bullocks and

his sheep into a place where hitherto he had been handicapped by heavy import duties for years and years past? The taxation is not mutual. The people of Victoria can send their stock, or anything else they can produce, into Riverina without paying a penny in border duties.

MR. MORAN: And Queensland will get its sugar free into the other colonies.

THE PREMIER: Undoubtedly. Its sugar and its cattle can be sent to other colonies free of duty, and besides Queensland can grow almost everything it requires for home consumption. Hon. members must have read the other day of a communication I had from the Premier of Queensland, who asked that we should put a duty to the extent of £5 a ton on all sugar imported from places other than the Australian colonies. We who have admitted sugar free for years are asked to put a duty on sugar imported from Europe, or from anywhere else but the colonies of Australia.

MR. JAMES: That is bounty-fed sugar.

THE PREMIER: It does not matter whether it is bounty-fed or not, the people of this country get it cheap, and want it cheap; but we are asked to put a duty on, in order that Queensland may sell her sugar at a higher price. Well, that will happen under federation, as proposed in the Bill.

MR. VOSPER: Another point is that there are 70 pounds of sugar in every hoghead of beer.

THE PREMIER: It is the same all over Australia. Take Tasmania, which is overstocked with produce for which it has no outlet. Its natural market, Victoria, is protected by almost prohibitive duties. Under federation those duties will be removed, and Tasmania will be able to send its fruit and other products free into Victoria. Those are the reasons which have actuated men of British lineage in deciding this great question; but, as I said many times in those Conventions, while we were all willing to believe in one flag and one destiny, and to take part in the founding of a nation, the desire for free markets, and for opportunities of selling produce, was greater in the minds of the people of Australia than their desire for nationhood; and I say it here too. I say that the desire to look after our own material interests in this colony should be greater, and is greater

if it can be brought home to us, than any sentimental consideration. You may depend upon it that we are not going to ruin ourselves for sentiment: it will not do, and I say that feeling obtains all over Australia. I am willing to give the other colonies credit for fine ideas and sentimental notions, and for a desire to be a great nation, and to be the chief power controlling these southern seas—I am willing to give them credit for that idea; but we will not let that idea control us to the extent of ruining ourselves; and you may depend upon it that in Victoria and in New South Wales—I am positive of it as regards those two colonies—the great lever which is sending them forward to federation is the knowledge that they are going to make some money out of it, and to do well out of it; and that being so, are we to be different? Are we to accept this Bill without looking at it, because they framed it to suit themselves? It may be said that I framed it too. Well, I take some part of the responsibility, but I was only one. There were only a few of us there from Western Australia, and the others were all united. The interests of the other colonies were nearly identical. Personally, I think Victoria and South Australia have the best of the bargain as between the other colonies; for I think it will be found that, instead of losing, those two colonies will gain considerably. As to whether New South Wales will gain, I am not so certain—I very much question whether she will; and in regard to Queensland, I think federation ought to suit her as well as any other colony in Australia, for although her manufactures are behind-hand, still she has all the elements that make a great country. Still, I do not think that, with the exception of her sugar, she has many products which she wishes to get into the other colonies free. I really think that she is able to stand by herself without assistance from any other colony. I only hope that we will settle down to this question, and look at it not altogether apart from sentiment, but from a business point of view; and I feel quite sure, from the temper of this House and the tone of the speeches we have listened to to-night, that there is a good feeling in this Chamber; that we may rely on it this Bill will be sifted, that even for the sake of our senti-

mental ideas we will not lose sight of our material interests, and that our main object will be, whatever the result, whomsoever we offend, whether we go out of this House and never set foot inside of the Legislative Chamber of this colony again we will nevertheless be true enough and loyal enough to this country, which is our home, and which we all love so well—we will be so true and so loyal to our country that, at whatever sacrifice to ourselves, we will stand by and do our duty to the people of this colony. [General applause.]

Question—that the Address-in-Reply be adopted—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10-24 p.m., until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 12th July, 1899.

Message: Appropriations for Bills (3)—Paper presented—Address-in-Reply, Presentation—Question: Overhead Bridge, Fremantle—Question: Railway Running Sheds, East Perth—Perth Mint Amendment Bill, Trust Investment Amendment Bill, first readings—Return: Embezzlement by Government Employees; motion withdrawn—Return: Crimes Committed and Perpetrators Unpunished; motion lapsed—Motion (notice) withdrawn: Referendum—Motion: Women's Franchise, to affirm; Division—Petition: Right of Way, East Perth; Division—Adjournment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair at 4-30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

MESSAGE—APPROPRIATIONS FOR BILLS (3).

A Message from the Governor was presented by the PREMIER, and read, recommending that appropriations be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for

the purposes of the following Bills:—1, An Act to amend the Perth Mint Act, 1895; 2, An Act to impose Duties in respect of Dividends; 3, An Act to provide for the Improvement of Rural Lands, and for other purposes.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Federation Resolutions passed by public meeting at Boulder. Ordered to lie on the table.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY—PRESENTATION.

At twenty minutes to five o'clock the DEPUTY SPEAKER, accompanied by hon. members, proceeded to Government House to present the Address-in-Reply to the opening Speech of His Excellency; and, having returned,

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER reported that His Excellency had been pleased to reply as follows:—

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

I receive with pleasure the renewed assurance of your loyalty and devotion to our Most Gracious Sovereign.

I thank you for the Address in reply to my opening Speech, and for the assurance that your most careful consideration will be given to the important matters referred to therein, and also to all other matters that may be submitted to you, and that it will be your earnest endeavour to so deal with them that your labours may result in the permanent advancement and prosperity of the Colony.

Government House, Perth, 12th July, 1899.

QUESTION—OVERHEAD BRIDGE, FREMANTLE.

MR. HIGHAM asked the Commissioner of Railways, When the overhead bridge from Bay Street to South Quay, Fremantle, will be constructed.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied, that the plans had been submitted to the Fremantle Town Council, and so soon as the details had been approved, and funds provided, the work would be carried out.

QUESTION—RAILWAY RUNNING SHEDS, EAST PERTH.

MR. JAMES asked the Commissioner of Railways, Whether the Government intend to erect running sheds on the land resumed in East Perth; and, if so, when?