

should like to thank hon. members for the kindly references they have made to the honour which has been conferred upon me by Her Majesty. From the numerous telegrams and letters I have received, I believe the choice of Her Majesty has given general satisfaction throughout the colony. I consider that a great honour has been conferred upon this House by its President having been selected for this special distinction. I also feel proud in being the second native-born West Australian who has received the honour of knighthood from Her Majesty. I trust that in the future, as in the past, my public duties will be so carried out as to meet with the same approval that they have done in the past. I again thank hon. members for their kindly references.

Question—That the address be presented—put and passed.

BUSINESS DAYS—ARRANGEMENT OF.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker), by leave, amended the motion of which he had given notice, and moved, That unless otherwise ordered, the Council do meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, at half-past two o'clock p.m., and on Thursdays, at half-past four o'clock p.m.

Question—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 8.45 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, 11th July, at half-past two o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 6th July, 1893.

Water Supply for Travelling Stock—Sessional Orders :
Business Days and Hours : Precedence of Govern-
ment Business : Standing Orders Committee :
Library Committee : Printing Committee : Refresh-
ment Rooms Committee—The Address-in-Reply :
Adjourned Debate—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

WATER SUPPLY FOR TRAVELLING STOCK.

MR. RICHARDSON, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works what progress had been made towards obtaining a good supply of water for travelling stock, between Northampton and Roebourne, and also between Roebourne and Kimberley.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied :—The Government having obtained sufficient information respecting the most suitable line for a stock route, the matter was decided, and the stock route gazetted. Sufficient troughing has been forwarded to the various Roads Boards through whose districts the stock route runs, and these boards have consented to undertake the sinking of the wells which it was deemed desirable to provide, or the deepening of others, funds having been allocated for the purpose. Representations have, however, been made that the sums allocated will not be sufficient; provision will therefore be made on the Estimates (to be submitted) for this purpose.

SESSIONAL ORDERS—BUSINESS DAYS AND HOURS.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, "That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for despatch of business on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 7.30 p.m.; and on Tuesdays and Fridays at 2.30 p.m., and, if necessary, until 6.30 p.m."

MR. PIESSE moved, as an amendment, "That all the words after the words 'business on' be struck out, and that

the following be inserted in lieu thereof:—‘Mondays, at 7:30 p.m.; Tuesdays, at 2:30 p.m., and, if necessary, until 6:30 p.m.; and on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7:30 p.m. onwards.’”

MR. R. F. SHOLL said an amendment of this kind should be placed on the Notice Paper, for consideration, before being moved. He objected also that absent members were not aware that it was to be moved. The subject should be adjourned until the next sitting of the House.

MR. LOTON asked why the time for sitting should be restricted to 6:30 p.m.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the object was to ensure a clear evening to members, by restricting the afternoon sitting to 6:30 o'clock. The amendment, however, would prevent the House from sitting on Fridays.

MR. LOTON preferred the amendment, as a decided improvement, because it would give to some country members an opportunity for visiting their homes at the week ends, and returning in time for the business on Monday evenings. By sitting on two days in the week, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., and sitting again in the evenings, the House would get through quite as much business as by the other arrangement, besides having a little more liberty. Therefore he was in favour of the amendment.

Amendment—put and passed, and the resolution, as amended, agreed to.

PRECEDENCE OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved—“That on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day.”

MR. DEHAMEL said the motion would give three days in the week for Government business, leaving only one for private members' business. The Government might be content with two days.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the proposition asked for by the Government was reasonable. The suggested amendment would give too much of the time to private members.

MR. SIMPSON said that, in order to meet the Premier's wish and the convenience of country members, he proposed that the Government business should take precedence on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. It would then be open to the Government to request a sitting on any Friday when the state of business required an additional day.

THE SPEAKER said the hon. member's proposal would not be in order, because Friday was not appointed as a sitting day.

MR. LOTON suggested that the Government business should take precedence on Mondays and Wednesdays, leaving Tuesdays open, to be appropriated when required, and Thursdays might be for private members' business.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he knew that in the other colonies the private members' business was limited to the afternoons, from 4:30 to 6:30 o'clock, and that in the evenings the Government business took precedence. He was, however, quite willing to fall in with the general wish of the House. From his experience, he did not think that private members occupied very much time with private business in the House, and that one evening in each week would be sufficient. It was not reasonable that only the same amount of time should be allowed for Government business as for private members' business.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) moved, as an amendment, that on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and also on Thursdays after 7:30 p.m., the Government business should take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day.

Amendment put and passed, and the resolution, as amended, agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, “That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members, viz.:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Canning; with leave to sit during any adjournment, and authority to confer upon subjects of mutual concernment with any committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Council.”

Agreed to.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, "That the Library Committee of this House for the present session consist of the following members, viz.:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Harper; with authority to sit during any adjournment and during the recess, and with authority to act jointly with the Library Committee of the Legislative Council."

Agreed to.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, "That the Printing Committee for the present session consist of the following members, viz.:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Venn, and Mr. Canning; to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing executed by order of the House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing Returns and Papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members, and all papers laid upon the table, whether in answer to addresses or otherwise."

Agreed to.

REFRESHMENT ROOMS COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, "That the Refreshment Rooms Committee for the present session consist of the following members, viz.:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Marmion, and Mr. R. F. Sholl; with leave to sit during any adjournment and during the recess."

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he noticed that this committee undertook these duties during the session only.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said they did so during the recess also.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not care to undertake this duty all the year round. At the end of the last session a motion was sprung on the House requiring the refreshment room to be kept open during the recess, for the convenience of members. This entailed a great expense to the country, for the convenience of only a few members. These being his views, and as he could not object to serve on the committee, it would be better to elect in his place someone who would take more interest in the work.

Question—put and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

MR. DEHAMEL: Sir, the Speech which we had yesterday the privilege of receiving was one of the longest, but not the longest, that has been delivered since the introduction of Responsible Government. The remarks I desire to offer upon it will be confined within very narrow limits. On the last occasion when I opened the debate on the Address-in-Reply, I was accused by the Premier of being unpatriotic and unfair. And why? Because I then pointed out that the state of the colonies, including this one, and the state of the money market in England, demanded extreme caution on the part of the Government in the expenditure of the Loan moneys committed to their care. And because I urged the partial suspension of the public works, and a procedure by the Government with the most pressing of those works alone, at that time, the Premier ridiculed that sound advice—as I considered it at the time, and which has been proved wise since then—and declared his intention of proceeding with those works as rapidly as possible. Since then, event has followed event with almost startling rapidity; and those events have justified almost every word that I uttered on that occasion. For we now find the Government have been compelled—not of their own free will, not from pressure brought to bear on them by members of this House, but simply from the force of circumstances—to adopt the very policy which I then advocated, and to partially suspend, for a time, the continuation of some of those public works. It is not my intention, in any way, to attempt to glory in this; for I am sure we must all feel that the Government have had a very trying ordeal to pass through. They had an ordeal to pass through that it was impossible for them to foresee—an ordeal that they were certainly absolutely powerless to avert. They had to contend with Bank suspensions in this colony, with stagnation of trade in England, and a fall in the price of silver, conjointly with a commercial crisis unparalleled during the present century, throughout the whole world; and I think that during this time the Government have shown a grit which we must all acknowledge, and which we must all

admit, they deserve some gratitude for showing. And again—though it is but a rumour, the matter to which I would like to refer is another instance in which great credit is due to the Government, if the rumour be true—the rumour is that when there was a run on the Western Australian Bank, the Government came to the rescue, and helped the Bank through. I do not know whether the rumour is true, but, if it be true, the Government showed great wisdom, and are certainly deserving of the thanks of this community generally—not only of the community of Perth, but of the entire colony. Therefore, you will see that I refer to this partial suspension of public works by the Government not in order to cavil at their action, but to prove the wisdom of my action, which, at the time, the Premier so strongly condemned. Now I find, on referring to the Speech of His Excellency, that the gist of the first four paragraphs lies in these concluding words:—"There never was a time in this colony when 'so many useful and important public works were being carried out.'" This is particularly true; but, on the other hand, there never was a time in this colony when so much public money—not out of revenue, but out of loans—was being expended. Moreover, to my mind, the true basis of congratulation does not depend so much on the amount so being expended, or on the largeness of the public works so being carried out, as on the question whether this expenditure or whether these works tend to the good of the colony, and on the prospect of their being reproductive. I would like to have seen this colony truly prosperous during the expenditure of these public moneys; but can it be said to be so? As I pointed out some six months ago, there was then depression extending from the far North down to Albany in the South; and yet, in spite of the continual expenditure of these loan moneys, it is an undoubted and admitted fact that there is a greater depression throughout the country, even at the present time, than there was then. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] One member says "No," but I think the public say "Yes." I still think, sir, that the Government have been not only too lavish, but actually extravagant in the expenditure of these loan moneys. [MR. R. F. SHOLL: Yes.] I will but refer to

two or three things which I have in mind out of many to which I might refer. For instance, there was the purchase of those blocks of land at Geraldton—land not necessary, and purchased at absurdly high prices. I think, myself, that if the Government had said to the owners of those blocks that unless they accepted a fair valuation by the Government valuer, the Government would not purchase them at all, but simply use their statutory power of resuming so much land as might be necessary to connect the new jetty with the existing railway lines, the Government would then have found that the owners would have come round and accepted the terms offered, the Government thereby saving to the colony a large amount of money. I am perfectly certain the Government would have saved thousands of pounds simply by taking enough land, and enough land only, to connect the new jetty with the existing line, and thus have avoided the changing of the existing line out of the main street at all. Another instance is the erection of the costly and unnecessary postal and telegraph offices and other public buildings, not only along the Great Southern Railway, but throughout all parts of the colony; and also, finally, the erection of stations and station buildings which are some twenty years in advance of our present requirements, along the route of the South-Western Railway. I remember perfectly well the Premier making a statement—which amused me much at the time—that he was no believer in the old adage, "Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves;" he stating, as his dogma, that his view was that if he took care of the pounds he might well leave the pence to take care of themselves. That was, as near as possible, the statement made by the Premier of a new dogma which I, for one, cannot accept as an improvement on the old one; and I attribute this too lavish expenditure as being in accordance with that dogma, in a great measure to the failure of the Treasurer to look after the pence, and I fear this fallacy is losing to the colony many, many thousands of pounds. I was surprised, to find no reference made in the Speech to the fact that this colony has at length attained to a population of 60,000 souls. A speech delivered as this Speech was, is

not delivered to us alone, but practically to the world. It is a Speech that will be read in all the principal financial circles, by almost all influential men, not only in London, but also throughout the Eastern colonies of Australia; and I think such an important fact as that this colony has at last reached that limit of population, the 60,000, which entitles it to elect a Legislative Council, might well have been made known to so many persons outside the colony through this Speech, and made known as a source of sincere congratulation. I think the sooner it is made publicly known the better; and having attained to that number, it is our duty now to use every effort to increase the population from 60,000 up to six figures, for there is no doubt that the moment we get to the number of 100,000 souls, this colony will never look behind again, and the future prosperity and increase will be then assured. What magic there may be in six figures, I cannot tell; but everyone in the Eastern colonies says the same thing: "When your colony gets up to six figures, you will never look behind." I am glad to see that the Government intend to re-introduce the Constitution Act Amendment Bill, and I believe that the passing of this measure will do much to encourage confidence in the colony, and to increase its prosperity and also its population. I hope and believe the Government will, on this occasion, make sincere and earnest efforts to pass this measure into law; and, so far as I am concerned, I may assure them that they will receive the same loyal assistance to this end as they did on the previous occasion. I do not now fear its rejection in another place, for I think the population having at last attained the total of 60,000 souls, the members in another place will see the desirability of having this matter settled, and thus have one general election at the same time for the new Parliament, instead of having, by its rejection, two separate elections, with turmoil and probable stagnation of business extending over a period of twelve months. I am also glad to see the Government recognise the necessity for encouraging the settlement of our lands; but I still maintain that it is not so much by a Homesteads Bill that this will be attained, as by a joint liberalisation and amendment of our present land

laws and regulations. However, half a loaf is better than no bread; and I will, so far as it is possible, support any well-considered measure having for its object the settlement of people on the land, that may be placed before us. Coupled with this is also a vague reference—for on reading the Speech there is nothing definite about it—to a possible revision of the tariff. I sincerely regret that the Government lost a golden opportunity, when they first took office, of then revising the tariff in the direction of a free-trade policy altogether. That golden opportunity has gone, and I fear now that a revision, whenever it takes place, will tend more towards a protectionist than to a free-trade policy; because we cannot close our eyes to the fact that the tariff is our principal source of revenue, and that heavy responsibilities are daily creeping up before us. I am no pessimist myself, but it seems to me far from safe for members of this House to close their eyes to a few solid facts that I desire to place before them. They are these: When the present Government took office, the public debt was, in round numbers, one and a quarter millions sterling. On the 31st December last this public debt had risen to £2,261,863. Add to this the balance of the authorised Loan which has not yet been raised, £436,000; add also the Midland Railway Loan, for which we are responsible as guarantors, £500,000—[MR. R. F. SHOLL: Which we will have to pay, too]—add also the proposed Loan of £500,000; and we find a total indebtedness of no less than £3,697,863. This is equal to a total indebtedness of no less than £61 10s. per head of our present population.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It is not all borrowed yet, nor spent either.

MR. DEHAMEL: It is not yet, but is close upon being borrowed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: It will soon be spent, after it is borrowed.

MR. DEHAMEL: That is the gross total of the debt. But then we have to look at the interest; and so I find our present liability for interest is £98,200 a year, and when the balance of Loan money is raised we shall have £71,800 extra of interest to pay, thus making a total of no less than £170,000 a year, for interest and sinking fund, which we

shall be obliged to provide in order to meet our liabilities. And this is irrespective of the maintenance and upkeep of our various public works which have been and are being completed in this colony. For instance, when the present, what I term ephemeral, revenue derived from our railways for the haulage of materials required in constructing our present public works shall have ceased, we will have to meet a heavy annual loss on the working of our existing railways. Then we shall be bound to meet a heavy annual loss on the working of our new lines. There is no escaping from that; it is bound to come. And, finally, there are those various post and telegraph offices and other public buildings to which I have referred, which will require persons in charge of them, whose salaries will become a permanent and constantly increasing charge and burden on the revenue of the colony. It is useless for us to close our eyes to these things. They are things that must come. They are liabilities that we are bound to face; and I think that the sooner we become alive to our heavy responsibilities the better for us, the better for the colony, and the better for all concerned. As regards the Midland Railway, it may be expected that I shall have a few words to say. But it is never my custom to flog a dead horse. My opinions remain unchanged entirely; but history must now decide whether the Government, or whether I and those who so loyally supported me on this question, were right or wrong in our views and opinions respecting it. In conclusion, I deeply regret that no reference has been made in this Speech to the appointment of a Civil Service Commission. We are all alive to the absolute necessity that exists for the appointment of an independent body to act as a Civil Service Commission. Were further proof needed, it would be found in the report of the Auditor General which was placed before us at our last sitting. I would refer to his report at page 113, paragraph 8:—"The Railways Department (as with all other departments) should be viewed simply as a 'customer,' and, of course, on production of the required authority its wants would be supplied; but to allow that department to have full sway over assets of the colony to the extent it now enjoys is, to

my mind, adverse to every principle of economy; and, indeed, it is not saying too much, if that department is allowed to pursue its present course, that the day is not far distant when the keys of the public chest may be demanded, in order to carry out to the full extent the principle of 'self-help,' which has of late characterised the management of this very important but expensive public department." And again, referring to the same department, on page 119:—"A high official attached to this department has informed me, on more than one occasion, that he wants a 'free hand,' and I verily believe he does, judging by his actions in the past; but whether he will succeed in obtaining his wishes in this respect is, of course, quite another question, as so much depends, as I told him, upon the view taken by Parliament and the Government in the matter. It has been my misfortune, during the past year, to meet with obstruction; indeed, I may at once say that I have experienced great difficulty and delay in obtaining replies to my numerous queries, and also in enforcing the requirements of the law in this particular department. There is abundant proof on record to show that some of its officers at least are under the impression that the Minister is all-powerful, and has a legal right to expend the vast sums voted by Parliament, not excepting appointments to important positions in the Service, which under the Constitution Act (*vide* sec. 74) and Audit Act, 1891, are vested in the Governor in Council. Of course, my duty compelled me to challenge such right and join issue with those holding this view; and, further, I have been obliged to move the head of the Government in the matter. The Hon. the Premier addressed an able minute to Ministers on the subject (*vide* papers T 353,92, and 526,92,) and the result has been that all important contracts and appointments are, as they should be, approved by the Governor in Council. I may remark that it would be more conducive to the best interest of the Service if all the officers attached to this particular department would only apply themselves to the task of learning and carrying out the law in force in Western Australia, instead of continually and so persistently advocating that of another part of the Empire. Finally, let me say

that I feel the burden of responsibility pressing heavily upon me, and I need and crave for the assistance of all officers throughout the Service, in the shape of prompt and satisfactory replies to my queries; and, above all, I require a strict compliance with the *law of this land*, in order to enable me to discharge faithfully the duty entrusted to me on behalf of our colony, its Parliament, and its Government." Sir, if proof were needed it is here indeed furnished; and the absolute necessity for a check by an independent body over, not only the action of our servants in the Public Departments, but in the appointment of all officers throughout the entire body of the Service; and I trust that the day will not be far distant before such a Commission may be appointed, and a stop thereby put to abuses.

MR. SOLOMON: In rising to address the House upon the very interesting and important Speech of His Excellency, I crave indulgence for a short time while expressing my views on some of the most important items contained therein. I am sure that every member of the Ministry, as well as members of the House, take too deep an interest in the welfare of the colony not to accept from any member his views upon the present political and critical aspect of affairs; and if, in using a few figures, I am deemed tedious, I hope to be excused, in view of the exigencies of the times through which we are passing—a financial and political crisis unparalleled in the history of Australia, and also in many parts of the world. This colony has, however, to be congratulated that the only two Banks which have had to give way under the pressure have been reconstructed satisfactorily, through the forbearance, and I may say liberal concessions, of their depositors and creditors. Progress made in the development of mineral resources must always be a source of gratification, more especially in a colony such as ours, the resources of which are only in their infant development, and show that this colony will eventually prove one of the greatest mineral countries in the world. I have little doubt, however, that the coal which has been discovered in the South, if present indications and prospects are realised, will make Western Australia a more stable and steadily prospering colony, than the finding of richer mine-

erals. Our ports would, I believe, become about equal to any other ports on the globe by the development of coalfields, which would also be the means of settling a steady and permanent class of colonists with their families, besides saving to the colony vast expenditure in the shape of fuel. If, upon the satisfactory report of an expert, there are lasting seams of good coal in the colony, I am, I think, not saying too much in stating there would not be one dissentient voice in the colony to a proposal from the Government for building a railway to the coalfields. It is satisfactory to note that certain public works have been completed, and others are proceeding. The Government are to be congratulated, in a great measure, on the plan of many of those works; but there are one or two on which I think some unnecessary expense might have been saved. I allude particularly to the telegraph line to Rockingham, still uncompleted; for if a diversion had been made by going through Richardson's paddock, a saving of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length might have been effected, and this should be a consideration in a total length of 15 or 16 miles.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): There could hardly be that length in the distance.

MR. SOLOMON: If the line had gone through that paddock, there would have been a saving of fully three miles. Turning to another matter, it is satisfactory to learn that the pump hopper dredge is doing such good service at Albany, and I can only hope that it will do equally good and successful work at Fremantle and elsewhere. That the Commissions appointed will be of great service, there cannot be the slightest doubt. Especially am I pleased that the tariff is being inquired into, as I feel sure the conclusions will be satisfactory, judging by the appointment of the members, who are practical business men, and will see the necessity of recommending such changes as will not press heavily on one class of the community, while at the same time helping the development of local industries. It is satisfactory to learn that the Constitution Act Amendment Bill is to be re-introduced; and I should like to hear also whether the Government intend to bring forward a Bill for amending the Electoral Act, as this needs

amending as much as the other, and although it was stated by the Premier, last session, that the Government intended bringing that measure forward, yet there is nothing about it in the Speech before us. The Homesteads Bill, it is also pleasing to find, is to be again introduced, also that the Imported Labour Registry Act will receive attention, bringing the latter in unison with the law on the subject in the other colonies. I trust that amongst other Bills there will be one to stop the increasing establishment of pernicious clubs, which are far more numerous than the increase of publichouses. If a would-be publican cannot get a publichouse license, all he has to do is to get a few friends together, and form a club, which in most instances is a disgrace to the community, and a nuisance to the neighbourhood in which it is started. I hope that a proper quarantine station, away from the mainland, will be among the suggested improvements; also hospital accommodation at Fremantle, it being a seaport town, where more accidental injuries occur than in any other town of the colony. The casualty ward, as at present constituted, is certainly inadequate to the requirements of the main port of the colony. The sandalwood industry is another matter to which the Government promised to give attention during the recess, and I hope something will be proposed for saving this valuable industry from becoming a thing of the past. I note a remark in paragraph 12 of the Speech, that the revenue for the past six months has exceeded that received for the corresponding period of last year; but I do not see any reference to the expenditure for the same period; and it is to be hoped this has not exceeded the revenue. It is necessary that the revenue should have increased, and to a material extent, if it is to come up to the Estimates which were passed in the last session. I am going to endeavour to point out that it sometimes happens that the increase of expenditure is more in proportion than the increase of revenue for a similar period; and I trust hon. members will bear with me whilst I endeavour to explain what I mean, by comparing the statements of revenue and expenditure as they appear in the Blue Book for 1892, just issued, and bringing the figures up to the 31st December.

The total revenue for the year ending December 31st, 1892, is shown to be £543,888 11s. 11d., the total expenditure being £550,616 7s. 5d.; leaving an excess of expenditure over income in that year amounting to £6,727 15s. 6d. Comparing the revenue and expenditure of 1892 with 1891, I find that the revenue for 1891 was £497,670 2s. 8d., as against £543,888 11s. 11d. for 1892, showing a difference in favour of 1892 of £46,218 9s. 3d. Comparing the expenditure, I find that in 1891 it was £435,622 15s. 9d., as against £550,616 7s. 5d. for 1892, showing an increase of expenditure in 1892 amounting to £14,993 11s. 8d.; thus making a total increase in expenditure of £68,775 2s. 5d. in 1892, as against 1891. Our population at the end of December, 1891, numbered 53,285, and at the end of 1892 it had increased to 58,674, being a gain of 5,389; and it thus appears that the increase of population cost the country £12 15s. per head, as shown by the increase of expenditure. So that, taking the whole of the expenditure into account for 1892, although the cost of the whole population of the colony was about £9 7s. 8d. per head, yet the cost on the increase of population was £12 15s. per head. It appears to me, however, that the cost per head for working this colony is excessive; and I cannot but think that we should have a Commission to look into the whole working of the Civil Service. I will try to show you why. Taking the total revenue of 1892 as amounting to £543,888 11s. 11d., and deducting therefrom the Customs receipts as shown, £276,554 0s. 8d., there remains for all other heads of the Service the sum of £269,334 11s. 3d. Then, taking the expenditure for the same period, and deducting the Customs expenditure of £8,004 5s. 6d., showing for all other heads the sum of £542,612 1s. 11d., this leaves the expenditure at £534,607 16s. 5d., as against the revenue of £269,334 11s. 3d., the expenditure thus being very nearly 200 per cent. of the revenue of the whole departments. So I think hon. members will agree with me that the time has come for a commission of inquiry into the working of the Civil Service; and I feel certain the result will be a recommendation for considerable retrenchment in some of the depart-

ments. I hope that, amongst other matters to be brought forward by the Government, will be the desirability of taxing the unimproved lands of the colony, especially those lands which have been enhanced in value by the expenditure of millions of loan money, which is costing the country at present over £60 per head. It may be said the roads boards have the power to tax the land. No doubt they have, but do they do it? Do they not come to the Government every year for money to mend their roads, without in any way doing anything themselves to assist? And I think it will be necessary, before long, to carry out with these boards the principle applied to municipal councils, and give them an equivalent in the pound of what they raise in rates. Out of an estimated area of 624,576,000 acres of land in the colony, there is an estimated area of 624,414,541 acres uncultivated. The amount alienated from the Crown at the end of 1892 was 5,505,200 acres; and taking therefrom 161,459 acres under cultivation, there remain 5,344,741 acres locked up, uncultivated, and alienated from the Crown. Now, suppose there was a tax, say of one penny per acre, on this uncultivated land, the revenue from this source would be £22,269 15s. 1d. It is only fair that the proprietors of these uncultivated lands should bear a proportion of the burden of taxation, the bulk of which is at present derived from one department, namely, the Customs. I cannot sit down without remarking on the dissatisfaction caused generally by the employment of people in certain departments, who have recently arrived in the colony, and been placed over the heads of worthy persons who had been in the colony's service for many years. I must also remark that, taking into consideration the indebtedness of the colony and the taxation, our institutions are not what they should be—having no proper quarantine grounds, nor sufficient hospitals, and no suitable public buildings where the people are daily entering, except the Post Office and Treasury buildings. In conclusion, I consider that extreme caution is necessary for the future management of this colony's immense estate; for it is only needful for hon. members to look carefully into the figures, some of which I have given this evening, to realise how surely, though slowly, we are drifting into a position

possibly as bad as that of other colonies.

MR. RICHARDSON: I do not think there is very much in the Speech of His Excellency that requires long comment. I am sorry to hear that some members do not hesitate to make statements in this House which are at least damaging to the reputation of this colony; and I think it is the duty of hon. members to take care that the statements they make are not very wide of the facts, because we have all to remember that if we occupy positions in this House we cannot speak merely as private individuals. Some responsibility attaches to our speeches in this House, and we ought to at least try to keep our figures somewhere near the facts. The hon. member for Albany has given us some figures, and I am sorry to find they have been quoted by the hon. member for South Fremantle; and being thus corroborated, they may be taken by the outside world as facts. We have been told by the hon. member for Albany that if certain things happen, and certain money is expended, we will owe something over three millions of money; also that on our present basis of population of 60,000, we owe something like £61 per head. But these facts are all astray. The hon. member said, in effect, that our present population is to stand still while our indebtedness goes on increasing! But, on the basis of the loan money now being expended, the public indebtedness amounts to £2,262,000; on the basis of our present population of over 60,000, we owe only £37 13s. 4d. per head, and by the time we do owe some three millions of money we shall have such an increase of population as will still keep down the proportion to that. I have previously said, as recorded in *Hansard*—and I still maintain it is a position which none of the other Australian colonies can lay claim to—that we have increased our total debt to a very considerable amount, and at the same time have decreased our indebtedness per head of the population. Although we may not have spent some of the Loan money as economically as we might have done, yet on the whole we have no reason to lament our ability to bear the burden of that expenditure. I may congratulate the Government on having offered to the country such a favourable statement, in

the Speech, and especially as to the output of gold, when we know that nothing like the quantity of gold which leaves this colony is recorded in the statistics. I notice, too, that the harbour works at Fremantle have made almost phenomenal progress, and I am informed that the Engineer-in-Chief is as firmly persuaded as ever that they are likely to be a success. I notice that the railway to Busselton is to be commenced as soon as possible. I believe it is a fact that the calling of tenders for that line was postponed, for some reason—possibly there may be a few members in this House who would like it postponed indefinitely, or for ever, but I am not one of those. I have no intention of repudiating or stultifying my previous action in reference to that line, but I should like to see the route re-considered. It would be wise on the part of the Government to see whether the route chosen is really the best one, for I am convinced, from a recent personal inspection of the country, that the route is not the best or the right one. I think hon. members who voted against that line would be somewhat justified, if they did so because opposed to the present route, because it is not a route that is likely to make that line pay very well. If taken along the coast, the line will pass through some of the richest land that the colony possesses, being eminently suitable for small holdings, and for raising those products which we have to purchase so largely. I cannot see why the people down there should object to the route being changed, because they would thereby get a shorter route from Busselton to Bunbury, and also to Perth, besides tapping the best land. I hope the Government will disinterestedly and impartially select the route that is most likely to pay. I observe that paragraph 7 of the Speech gives some intimation that there will be a Land Bill introduced, and though I notice the same title as before has been retained, that of a Homesteads Bill, yet I do believe the measure will be of a far larger and different character as compared with the previous Homesteads Bill. I do believe and hope it will grapple with the question in a different manner altogether, and be the means of securing a very large settlement, not only of our first-class lands, but also of our second

and third-class lands; and that under this measure we may hope to see not only a few 160 acre blocks taken up, but see hundreds of thousands of acres taken up; that the terms will be sufficiently easy to induce men with means to go on the land and make it productive, and not leave the land, as it has lain during the last sixty years, an untilled waste and a wilderness. There is one question which many hon. members will regard as a touchy one to allude to, and that is the Chinese question. Some members may feel a delicacy in broaching it, as it is made a good deal of in the Press and on public platforms; but I think that even this question has two sides to it; and while I sincerely hope the Government will bring in a Bill to restrict the Chinese influx, yet I hope they will consider there are portions of this colony where the element of Asiatic or coloured or cheap labour of some kind is an absolute necessity, and while legislating to restrict the Chinese in one portion, they will not forget there is another portion that requires to be studied. Taking the colony as a whole, I maintain it is an absolute necessity that country districts and country settlers should have cooks, and as it is impossible to get their own race to perform these duties, especially in the summer, I do not see why the wives of settlers in the country should be compelled to labour like slaves, simply because there is a prejudice against a coloured race. Therefore I hope a small proportion of coloured people will be allowed to come here, sufficient to supply the demand for cooks and house servants in country districts. This will react very materially on the settlement of the land; for if you make life in country districts so objectionable and arduous by compelling wives and families to be mere drudges and slaves, you will not get people to live on country lands. Perhaps we may all be permitted to congratulate the Government on the successful floating of the Midland Railway Loan, notwithstanding all that has been said, and that the Company's affairs almost stink in the nostrils of the people of this country and of some people in London. Yet, if we succeed in completing a line of railway from Perth to Geraldton, and connecting a most important gold-bearing district with the capital of the colony,

notwithstanding all the odium of past transactions, we may honestly indulge in congratulation; for though the Midland Railway Company may not be such a body as we can admire, yet they will have done a very great and good work for this country. I do not now regret that the Midland Railway Company appeared on the scene, for bad as that Company is, yet it cannot be denied that we are in a very much better position to-day, if we can get that line finished, than we would be without the Company; and if it had not been for them we would not have been able even to entertain the idea of building a railway from Geraldton to Perth, because the taxation which would have been inseparable from such a gigantic work would have been more than our population could have borne. Even if it had been finished, probably we could not have stood the taxation. And even if we have to find this £500,000 after all, still we shall get a cheap bargain by having the railway made for us. I congratulate the Government on the healthy and sound position the colony occupies, and, notwithstanding the dark cloud, there is a really honest cause for congratulation on the superiority of our position, as compared with that of our neighbours.

MR. LEFROY: Although we have heard that depression is in the air, I do not think that hon. members look as if they felt it very much, and I do not think this House has ever met with better hopes for the future, than it has this week. One great thorn in the side of the Government—I think it has been a thorn—has been suddenly plucked out, and that is the Midland Railway trouble. I am sure it must have been a great relief to those hon. gentlemen who have held the reins of Government to feel that, at any rate for the present, that trouble has been removed. The Midland Railway question has affected the constituency which I represent, during a number of years, for it has been keeping back the settlers and retarding the progress of a large portion of the colony. The present Land Regulations were made in 1887, and it now seems extraordinary that the whole country between Champion Bay and Perth has been locked up against settlement and against the extension of holdings, and that none of the residents have been able to take advantage of those

Regulations. Therefore, I think it is a source of great congratulation that this large and important Midland Railway district will soon be opened up, and I hope we will soon have a great portion of that district settled. It is not the fashion to say much on the opening Speech, and it seems to me a sort of “canter past” before the Parliamentary race begins. We all meet here prepared to do our very best in the interests of the colony, which we are here to represent. There is little for us to criticise in the Speech. I think that, from what we see in it, we can only congratulate. Although gentlemen sit on different sides in this Assembly, there is no feeling of ill-will or desire to change positions between the sides of the House. It is gratifying to a great extent that such is the case, and I believe that at the present time it is to the interest of the country that this should be so. I am not one of those who feel that there are only five hon. gentlemen in this House able to administer the affairs of the country; and I think that when the time comes that the country desires a change in the Ministry of the day, there will be other gentlemen in this House able and willing to take the positions which the present Ministers have so ably filled. That time may be far off, and I hope it will be long in coming, because I feel that while they are working for the interests of the country, and as long as their ability will enable them to advance the interests of the colony, those hon. gentlemen will hold office. It is the fashion in these colonies for Ministries to live but a very short time, but I do not think it is a good one. In the old country we know that Ministries last long, and some of the best and ablest Ministries have lasted a number of years. That great statesman, Pitt, as we all know, held the reins of Government for 21 years; but in these days we do not succeed in finding men who are able to stand at the head of affairs such a long time. I am glad to see there is not an Opposition in this House that is at present prepared or willing to use the Address-in-Reply as a lever for throwing the Ministry out of office, as has been done in other colonies. The time may come, perhaps, though I hope it never will, when fair play will not be given to any Ministry that holds office.

Referring to the prospects of the country, we are having a splendid season; that depression which was felt in the North is gone, and we are now having, throughout the Central districts, such a season as none of us can remember for many years. The Government have much to be thankful for that such is the case, because a bountiful season will certainly operate in their favour, and make their task easier in advancing the best interests of the colony. One of the most important matters dealt with in the opening Speech is the reference to the yield of gold. It is not many years since the belief prevailed that there was no gold in this colony; when some people had to lower themselves to such a degree as to scrape brass candlesticks in order to make a pretence that they had found gold; yet now, after only a few years, gold is being discovered in such quantities that £300,000 worth was registered for export during the last year. We have much to congratulate ourselves on, in this altered position, and I hope that every incentive will be given to the gold industry in this colony. We cannot force people to occupy and cultivate the land, but a great many will doubtless come here to seek for gold, and I hope they will be so satisfied with the country that they will eventually settle down and cultivate the soil. Gold is a wonderful attraction, and even many of those who come here as settlers are at first led away to follow the search for gold rather than cultivate the land they intended to settle on, although when they find that the quest is not always so remunerative as they expected, I hope they will still settle on the land. I was one of those who opposed the Homesteads Bill last session, yet I feel that the Premier conscientiously believed in the measure he then introduced, and I know there is no question more important to this country than that of properly settling the lands of the colony. Therefore, I shall be prepared at all times to support any measure brought before this House with the view of liberalising the land laws of the colony, believing that we ought to make them as liberal as possible. We may not, perhaps, be blessed with such first-class estate as exists in some other parts of the world, but there is a great deal which can be done here; and I believe that if our

vast wastes of land were improved, we could support a large, happy, and thriving population. I hope that when the Bill which the Government intend to introduce this session, comes before us, it will be such as I shall be able to support. I think it is due to the Government of the day that hon. members should make a few remarks on this occasion. We have heard the hon. member for South Fremantle advocating a land tax; but under the present circumstances of the colony, when we are trying to induce population to come here, I do not think this is a time to introduce a land tax. The very sound of the name would frighten people away. I have no doubt the time must come when revenue will have to be raised in that way; but no statesman of this country at the present time, and I am certain no statesman such as our hon. Premier is, will think of introducing such a measure as that at the present time. I therefore simply hope that the colony may be always in as promising a condition on all future meetings of this House as it is at the present moment.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: The hon. member for South Fremantle stated that he had read with interest the lengthy and interesting Speech with which His Excellency had opened the session. I agree with the hon. member as far as the length goes, but I must say it is utterly uninteresting. It is made up of many words and sentences, but the information given in the Speech is very little indeed. We are told the Government intend to introduce various measures during the session, — a Homesteads Bill, among others — but whether that is the old, original Homesteads Bill which was rejected, or would have been rejected by this House last session, or whether it is a new Bill with the objectionable clauses left out, we are not informed. However, I hope the Bill will meet with the approval of a majority of the members of this House; and I think all the members desire to see a Bill that will conduce to the settlement of the Crown lands of the colony. It would be a wise action on the part of the Government to consult with members who represent agricultural districts, and are themselves agriculturists, in order to arrive at an agreement on some measure which will pass through this House without very much discussion. It is desirable

that the land should be settled and be made to produce sufficient, at any rate, to feed our own population, if not also for export. It is stated in paragraph 6 of the Speech that a Commission has been appointed to inquire into the working of the Tariff Act. No doubt the commissioners will complete their work before the session of Parliament is finished, so that the subject may be discussed on their report. For myself, I am not a protectionist. I believe in protection only so far as revenue is concerned. The colony must have a revenue, and if it is necessary for obtaining that revenue to place a duty on importations, I think this is all that is necessary. As to putting on a protective duty which is obnoxious to the whole of the consumers in the colony—and our consuming population is proportionately a heavy one—I am strongly opposed to that. We must not forget that we have a very large consuming population in proportion to producers and manufacturers; that the whole of the squatting population Northward of Champion Bay are consumers; that the whole of the gold-miners are consumers; and it is preposterous to expect that all these people, besides the consumers in the towns, are to be taxed simply for the benefit of a few farmers. I allude principally to the suggestion that a protective duty should be placed on cereals, on chaff, and such products. We are told, in the Speech, that the Bunbury Railway is nearly finished, and is likely to be a great benefit to the whole colony. I shall be pleased indeed if this railway proves a great benefit; but I did not know it was finished, and was not aware that the Government had taken it over.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The Speech does not say it is finished.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I thought that the Government always waited until a new railway was finished before they undertook to run passengers. However, I presume there is some arrangement with the contractor, for I see and hear there is considerably more traffic on the line than was expected. It is said that someone is endeavouring to create a traffic by taking firewood from Smith's Mill down to Bunbury; so there is no doubt that eventually this railway will pay. There is also a rumour—I do not know whether it is true—that the imported material

used on the South-Western Railway is of a faulty nature, and that a great deal has had to be replaced by fresh material. If that is so, it is a very serious matter, because I presume that someone appointed in England supervises the stuff before shipment, and is supposed to pass it. I hope the Government will be able to assure us that this is only a rumour; but if it is correct, some steps should be taken to provide a more capable supervisor in England, to look after our material in the future. It is a matter for congratulation to know that our goldfields are gradually developing. It is only a gradual development, and this is accounted for by the great distance of the goldfields from our centres of population. But I cannot congratulate the Government on the rate at which the Yilgarn Railway is being pushed ahead. I believe the contractor is hampered for the want of rails, which are not supplied with sufficient expedition, and that he has to wait until the rails are taken up from the Eastern Railway track between Perth and York, where heavier rails are being laid down; and generally there is not that energy in pushing on this important line to Yilgarn that there is on new works of less urgency in other parts of the colony. I see the Government purpose introducing a Bill empowering them to issue Treasury bills. I really do not know why the Government intend asking this House for power to do that which they have already done without a Bill. It was only in May last that the Government invited tenders for Treasury bills—I do not know why, but I hope we shall get that information before the session is much older. If the Government can do it in one case without the authority of this House, I really do not see the necessity for their coming to this House and asking us to waste time by passing a statute giving them that power. As to the vexed question of Chinese restriction, I am not one to howl down the Chinese, for they are not the despicable and contemptible beings that some persons would like others to believe they are. At the same time, I have no desire—indeed I think it would be a calamity—to see the country flooded with this class of immigrants. They are not good settlers; they do not remain in the country; they earn their money by thrift and industry, and they take it away.

But they are to a great extent a necessity. As was pointed out by the hon. member for the DeGrey, we must not forget that many people who come into the country and settle on land would not do so without some kind of cheap labour, as it would be impossible to get white servants to live on stations as cooks, gardeners, and station hands, and to perform those classes of work which our race do not take to kindly. I would like to see some means devised for preventing the colony from being flooded by Chinese, and yet allowing them to be admitted as cooks and domestic servants. I think that might be done, and it would meet all the requirements. I am glad to see the revenue has exceeded that of last year; but I am sorry that the Premier, in this Speech which is called the Governor's, but is really his—for it is all the same—has not stated the amount of the increase.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not know at present.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Neither has he told us what the expenditure has been as compared with the revenue. I agree with the hon. member for South Fremantle, when he says the expenditure has gone on increasing, and the revenue has not increased in proportion. With regard to the depression, I think the colony has wonderfully pulled through the disaster which has overtaken Australia, and the Eastern colonies particularly. Of course we have felt the depression, but we are pleased with the good season, from an agricultural and pastoral point of view, and that our goldfields are making steady development. Still, this check may show the Government that the colony cannot depend for its permanent prosperity upon the extensive expenditure of loan moneys: that while the expenditure is being made, it is scattered over so large an area that it cannot be felt to such an extent as to remove the general depression; that if the colony is to progress it must do so out of its own resources; and that this progress cannot be forced by the expenditure of loan money. In trying to develop the resources of the colony, it is a wise policy to borrow money for carrying out reproductive works; but to go on expending loan moneys in erecting public buildings away in the bush, in all sorts of little tin-pot towns, is an extravagance that no Gov-

ernment and no colony can be justified in carrying on.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Where have we done that?

MR. R. F. SHOLL: You have done it all along the Great Southern Railway.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That expenditure is out of revenue, not out of loan.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Out of loan also. I hope the Government will feel that when caution is preached, it is not for the purpose of running down our country, but that, as depression has to be faced now and may come again, we must be prepared to meet it, and not be too lavish in our expenditure, nor should we borrow money for public works that are not reproductive.

MR. LOTON: I do not propose to refer to any particular items contained in the Speech. I should not have risen, on this occasion, except for a remark which fell from the hon. member for Albany, who in congratulating the Government on its general action in the past made a remark to the effect that it was reported that during the financial crisis there was a run on the Western Australian Bank, and that the Government came to the Bank's rescue by rendering it some financial aid. I am pretty closely connected with the Western Australian Bank, occupying, as I do, a seat as a director; and I wish publicly to state that, so far as I know, there was no application made, either to the Government or anyone outside that Bank, during any run that may have been made on it, for extraneous financial aid. It met all the demands upon it out of funds it had in its possession. There was a slight run, an absurd one, caused, I believe, by a report made by some foolish person—I believe it was a woman, though I generally give the sex credit for having much better sense—who is reported to have said that she had a large sum of money in the Bank, some £15,000, and she could not get any of it. As a matter of fact, she did not have a penny in that Bank. Everyone who had money in the Bank, and wanted it, was enabled to get it. Now, with reference to his Excellency's Speech, I have very much pleasure in supporting the Address-in-Reply. There are no details in the Speech that we need trouble ourselves with, on this occasion.

The Address-in-Reply is in congratulatory and approving terms, and as I am prepared to look at matters in that way, I have much pleasure in according my support to it. I shall be prepared to give my support in that direction, and I trust that my views will be in accord with the measures which the Government may put before us. If they are not in accord, I shall not hesitate to express my dissent.

MR. SIMPSON: I remember, some years ago, in a speech by an Australian statesman, when criticising the Speech of His Excellency on opening the Parliament of another colony, he started by saying: "In the name of the Prophet, figs!" I think, sir, without pretending to be in the least degree a far-away imitator of that very able statesman, if I were to say of this Speech, "In the name of the Prophet, hash!" it would be a fair description of the Speech we have before us. No new feature, no particular incident or position in connection with the politics of the country, has been introduced for our consideration. But I do say—and from a recent application to public opinion I am in a position to say—that the present Government hold to-day the absolute confidence of this colony. I do not pose here as an extreme supporter of the Government, or an extreme member of the Opposition; but I have endeavoured to use my opportunities with a due regard to the responsibilities that accrue to a careful consideration of every measure put forward; and I do say, having moved through the country recently, that the Government in this colony hold and maintain the support and respect of the people. That support and that respect have been enhanced during the last half-year. The first half-year of 1893, a peculiarly trying period, will be written on the page of our history as one of those times that needed the utmost caution and care and deliberation in the management of this country. Through the trying ordeal of the past half-year the Administration of this colony has come, not with flying colours—for I do not believe they ever sought applause—but with the respect of the people in this colony, and I believe also in other countries, for careful, level-headed, sober judgment. The Speech, to my mind, says nothing new; but in connection with the moving of the Address-in-Reply, there

was a matter suggested to which I would like to solicit the attention of hon. members, and every citizen in this country. It has been suggested—perhaps outlined—by a certain portion of the Press of this colony which supposes itself to be astute, that it would be a wise thing to put an export duty on gold. Sir, I have no hesitation in saying that some men, for want of deliberation or want of judgment, may make this mistake; but I say that any man with a due regard to the interests of this country, to the development of its resources, to the enhancement of our industrial progress, who would attempt to put an export duty on gold, is laying an axe to the root of the tree of this colony's progress. To-day we are looking for increase of population; we seek it; we desire it; and, so far as I understand the intentions and wishes of the Administration of this colony, they last session sought to give the men engaged in gold-mining pursuits a vote; but now, in addition to charging those men a pound a year for the right to pursue their industry—and they do not charge it to the blacksmith, or the bricklayer, or the miller—they are going to put, or it is suggested they are going to put, an export duty of half-a-crown an ounce on gold sent out of the colony. It is only fair to say the Ministry have not mentioned any such intention; but, in saying what I now do, I believe I am speaking in their interest, because I know it has gone out through this country that the Ministry were going to do such a thing; and I say that to put an export duty on gold, merely for the purpose of securing a statistical return, is deliberately playing traitor to the best interests of the country. Whom will it tax—honest men or rogues? The honest men at present declare their gold, and you will compel them to pay a tax; while the rogues will evade it, as registration is evaded now. So far as I know penal legislation, it is in the direction of compelling rogues to pay for their crimes; but this would operate in the other way, and hurt the honest man, while the rogue would put his gold in his shammy belt. Suppose the Bill caught the rogue, what would you do with him? So far as I know, our gaoles are fairly full enough, and they are largely filled with coloured men—Chinamen, Malays, and others. I did

not believe the report, when I heard it from a commercial man in this community, who said he had it from a Minister, that unless the miners declared their gold, an export duty would be put on it. I declined to believe it then, and do so now, for I know the Ministry of this colony have too long-headed and too far-sighted an idea of the importance of the industry that is pulling this country through. In paragraph 5 of the Speech, particular reference is made to the pump hopper dredge. Well, in the interest of this colony, and having regard to the loan money that is being expended, I hope that as soon as that dredge has accomplished its purpose at Albany, which seems to be in need of something to help its industries, it will be sent to the Northern ports of the colony. At Carnarvon, for instance, there is a jetty on which a large sum has been expended, and only a little help from this powerful dredge is needed to make that jetty of real use to the public; and as to Geraldton, I know that if the dredge is shortly sent there, it will enable great ocean steamers to berth very near to the heart of the town, and close to the blocks of land which the Government resumed recently for the railway jetty and workshops and other useful public buildings. I am glad to see that the Government intend to reintroduce their Constitution Act Amendment Bill, as submitted to this House last session. I express the hope now, as I have done before, that one particular feature—writ large over the whole text of the Bill—will be the abolition of the Aborigines Protection Board. I have no hesitation in saying that the thing has grown to be a sort of burlesque, or a sort of Christmas pantomime, to all intelligent thinkers in the colony. In addition to that, I hope the Government will see the wisdom of establishing triennial Parliaments. Our conditions are changing so rapidly that elections at short periods are desirable. I appeal to you, the members of this House, to say: is there any comparison in the position of this colony to-day and five years ago? Our population is increasing by leaps and bounds—that is the popular phrase. We know, as practical men, that our population is increasing from different sources, and that men are bringing ideas from different centres, where triennial elections are the

law. Triennial Parliaments will secure to this colony a more exact application of the determined public opinion than we can obtain by elections under the present period of duration. With regard to paragraph 7, I see there is to be introduced a Bill by the name of the Homesteads Bill. So far as I know, the opposition to the patriotic intentions of the Premier in his Bill of last session was not directed against his motives, but against the means by which he proposed to carry them out; and I do think that those who opposed it will not object to the present Bill, for bearing the same name, so long as its provisions are different. If this new Bill will induce settlement on the land—and I speak amongst a collection of experts, men who have given greater attention and ability than I can hope to apply—then I say the Bill will be useful to the colony; but, so far as I can see, in these extraneous efforts, and throughout this policy of endeavouring to induce people to settle on the soil, they have gone a great deal nearer to settling them under the soil than settling them on the top of it. People will seek to make a living through the easiest channels and with the least effort; and, so far as I know the Anglo-Saxon race, a man would sooner have his income without sweat than with it. But, perhaps we shall be offered inducements in this measure which will attract men to settle on the land and become successful poor farmers. So far as I know farming, it is a rich man's industry; it is the pursuit of the capitalist; but we may be able to induce poor men to settle on the soil; we may be able, in the process of evolution in the settlement question, to do something which may be to the advantage of the country and the individual. So far as I know the question, it has a spine of hope, it has ribs of hope, it has a head of hope, its sinews are hopeful, and if we find it the capital and the land, hope may make it successful. But I am not sure. It is, however, our duty to endeavour to induce people to settle on the soil, but I want that inducement to be an honest one—not to induce people to start in that industry when we know they must be charges on the State. We know that if we lend them money, they won't be able to pay it back; that if we give them land, they won't be able to make a living.

Every assistance I can lend to secure such a measure I will give, with all the pleasure and enthusiasm that I can. But, I say again, there is a little too much hope, and not quite enough fact, in the question, to my fancy. I congratulate the Executive on the telegram received from London with regard to the successful floating of the Midland Railway Loan. I rejoice with the Government, and every member of the House, in hoping that we are rid of the Midland Railway question; but I would like to have seen the application money a great deal larger than it is, while I hope that the very narrow limit of that application money will not have put the Company in a position to pay up £20,000 and drag us into a law suit. The completion of that railway would be a matter of rejoicing for every man in the colony. I hope the loan money will be fully subscribed, that it will be properly expended, that the railway will be a paying concern to the Company, and that it will be maintained until this colony chooses to purchase it. One paragraph in the Speech refers to the Chinese question. I am considered in this House to hold extreme views on that question, but I am content to bear any stigma which that accusation may convey, and am content to live and die under it. But I believe I know as much about the progress of the Chinese question in Australasia as any hon. member in this House. I know I shall be met with the remark that England forced her opium into China by means of her guns. I admit my responsibility, as a Britisher; but I reply that I have seen British subjects starving, with their wives and children, because forced out of their industry by this cheap Chinese labour. Our countrymen compete under unequal conditions with the Chinese, because our countrymen want to dress their wives, and to send their children to school, and to bring them up so as to be able to govern the destinies of their country in the future. I say, therefore, that if we permit this uncontrolled influx of Chinamen into Australia, we are playing traitor to the race which bred us, and playing traitor to the men who fought for our liberties in the past. I have no hesitation about these Chinese. I am told it is an absolute requisite in the North, this Chinese labour. I represent a constituency north

of Perth, and have been careful to look into the figures, and I see that recently the influx of Chinese has been to Fremantle and Perth, but not to the North. I stepped ashore from the steamer *Lindus* last Sunday, and at the Fremantle railway station I got into a train for Perth. The first carriage I saw had seventeen Chinamen in it. I say now that there is a Chinatown growing up in Perth, and one in Fremantle. If they would go into the country districts and settle on our back blocks, and tame the wilderness, we would be content to make use of them as settlers; but they congregate round about the towns, and compete unequally with men of our own race; and in addition to that, there is no one who can say that Chinamen ever assimilate and become part of the British nation. Some of them are intelligent, certainly, but these exceptional specimens are only a sort of advertisement. Mr. Wrixon, formerly the Attorney General of Victoria, has stated that although only 317 naturalisation papers had been issued in Victoria, yet upon those papers 1,400 Chinamen had come into that colony. I ask hon. members: can you recognise Ah Foo from Tim Fat? I feel and speak strongly on this question. I had the pleasure, yesterday, of reading the report of the surveyors sent by the Lands Department into our recently occupied mining country at Coolgardie; and I say that, if Mr. Noel Brazier's opinion is worth anything, we have no idea of our resources. Here is a man with experience, who says he has seen country at Coolgardie the like of which he had never seen before; and he is a man who knows the other parts of Australia. Sir, I say: let us preserve our country for the people of our own race—for Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen, and for Australians who are coming here; and do not let us introduce into it this hybrid, piebald race of Chinese.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I thank hon. members for the reception which they have been pleased to give to His Excellency's Speech; and I thank them too, most sincerely, for the consideration they have given to the actions of the Government during the past six months. I do not think it is necessary for me to say much; in fact, it was hardly necessary for me to have risen, on this occasion, except that I might thank

hon. members for their expressions with regard to the conduct of the Government during the past six months. But now that I have risen, I will make a few observations with reference to what has been said by one or two hon. members. First of all I should like to refer to the observations of the hon. member for Albany, who seemed to take a great deal of credit to himself because last session he had warned the Government that the policy they were pursuing would lead them into difficulties; and he now seems to rejoice that he was a true prophet, and that the difficulties he professed to foresee have fallen on the Government. But, as a matter of fact, the hon. member, when he spoke in that strain last session, had not the least foundation for the remarks he then made; for a very few days after the hon. member delivered that speech—which I believe I described as unpatriotic—we raised in the London market a loan of £400,000 at par—a price which was considered, at the time, as most excellent, and which was quoted as an evidence of the renewal of the confidence of the British investors in Australian loans. Indeed, our loan seemed, at the time, to have given a better price to Australian stocks generally than had existed for some time before. Therefore, I am surprised that to-night the hon. member should have forgotten altogether that he made those observations before, and not after, we raised the last Loan, and that in contending to-day that he had on that former occasion been a true prophet, he had, in fact, been a very bad prophet. The difficulties he professed to have foreseen have arisen since that time, from causes outside of this colony. In fact, all the financial difficulties which have lately overtaken Australia are such as this colony cannot have been responsible for in any way. During the past six months the condition and prospects of this colony could not have been more favourable, apart from those outside causes of financial disturbance. We have had an excellent season, our public works have been carried on satisfactorily, we have had a large expenditure of money, both from current revenue and from loan; and under ordinary circumstances we would have been in a much more satisfactory position than at any other period of our history. It was only from circumstances

over which we had no control, and not of our own making, that the difficulties referred to in His Excellency's Speech have extended to this colony. But I think, after all, we have great cause for congratulation, because, notwithstanding all the adverse circumstances that have existed in the other colonies, and which have affected us in some degree, still our revenue for the past six months has exceeded the revenue of the first six months of 1892. The amount of the revenue in excess of the estimate was not stated in the Governor's Speech, because the accounts of the Treasury are not closed yet, but I believe the amount will be between £20,000 and £30,000 over the estimate. I am also not now able to inform hon. members of the total amount of the expenditure for the half-year, but I believe it will be found that the expenditure has been kept within fairly reasonable limits. The hon. member for South Fremantle seemed to get into a muddle with his figures, in dealing with the finances and the area of the colony. I could not follow the hon. member in his reasoning, but I am sure that other hon. members must see that he conveyed a wrong impression in trying to show that we were spending more than we were receiving. He seemed to show, by his management of the figures, that the revenue of the colony, during the time we have had Responsible Government, has not been so great as the expenditure. Now, the present Government commenced business with a credit balance of £45,599, and up to the end of 1892 the credit balance on Consolidated Revenue account had risen to £100,919.

MR. SOLOMON: And in 1891?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): At the end of 1891 the balance was £107,000. But it is useless to deal with short periods. I will deal with the whole period of two and a half years, and show that the revenue of the colony during that time has been £1,041,558, and the expenditure for that period has been £986,238, leaving a balance of £55,320 on the side of revenue. Adding to this the balance we took over at the commencement of the period, there was on the 31st December last a credit balance of £100,919. And, after all, even if the expenditure had exceeded the revenue during the two and a-half years, the result would not have been much to

find fault with; for, in view of the demands made on the Government all round, from one end of the colony to the other, from all directions and in every place, the Government must have required great strength of mind to withstand the appeals and the pressure from hon. members acting in the interests of their constituents, and from those constituents also. Yet we had, up to the end of last year, at all events lived within our means; and when we get the financial returns up to the end of June last, which will be complete in a few days, I hope they will show that the expenditure for the half-year has not exceeded the revenue. It has been said by some hon. members—particularly by the hon. member for Albany—that there never was a time when there was so much depression in the colony as at present. I have heard of it, but I do not believe it. There is a little depression, no doubt, resulting from the recent Bank suspensions and other causes; but throughout the colony, as a whole, I believe there is not that depression. If you go only 200 miles from here, to Geraldton, you will find things booming there. In fact, the other day, land in Geraldton was sold for twice as much as the owner expected to get. [AN HON. MEMBER: Three times as much.] Yes, I believe three times as much. I tell hon. members that I fail to see there can be any great depression in this colony, because during the past six months the Government have spent from £70,000 to £90,000 a month, and that circulation of money should have some effect on the community. The hon. member for Albany tried to make out as bad a case as he could against the colony. He seems to think that hon. members should try to traduce this colony, and make it appear worse than it is. He made out that we owe £60 a head on our present basis of population. Well, I will deal with that. At the present time our indebtedness is £26 per head of the population, and I see no reason why that indebtedness should not increase as time goes on. There is one matter I would like to refer to, as mentioned by the hon. member for the Swan, as to a report that the Government came to the rescue of the Western Australian Bank during a run on it. All I can say is that, if there was a run on that Bank, I never heard of it; but I do know

that no application was made to me, as Colonial Treasurer, on behalf of that Bank, for any assistance from the Government, I think the fact that this institution has been able to go through these difficult times, without in any way being affected, shows, at any rate, that the people in the colony have confidence in it. They know that nothing has happened in the colony that should diminish the standing and credit of that institution; and the people have too much sense, I hope, to try and pull down an institution which has done so much good for the colony, which is so much identified with its interests, and to which we are under such obligations. The hon. member for the Gascoyne said the Speech of His Excellency was disappointing. If he found it so, perhaps it was because there was nothing in it that he could find fault with. He advises us not to be too lavish in expenditure, although I can say we never intended to be lavish. We always spend what we have got, because there are so many demands on us to spend it. If our revenue were five times as great, there are plenty of wants and requirements on which to spend it. We do not intend to collect a revenue from the people, and then not spend it for the good of the people. We do not intend to lock it up. During the past few months, it is true, we have had an anxious time, not caused by anything that has happened in this country, but owing to the great difficulties in other colonies, and their effect on the London money market. It has been a time when we have had to be careful about our expenditure, for, as you all know, we have embarked on great undertakings, which necessitated the raising of a considerable amount of money, and all our projects and calculations are based on the expectation of being able to get the money as we require it, in the London market. Anything that affects the London market, at a time when we want to borrow, must be a matter of anxiety to us. As far as the Government are able to judge, the prospects of the colony are thoroughly good; and, as His Excellency has said in his Speech, there is a substantial credit balance in the Treasury on current account; an excellent season is assured, and everything in the colony is in a condition which gives good promise for the future, provided wise and moderate counsels prevail. I

am quite sure that wise and moderate counsels will prevail, and I am glad to see the Government are supported by the good wishes of hon. members of this House. I again thank hon. members most sincerely for the reception given to His Excellency's Speech, and for the support they have given to the Government.

Question—That the Address-in-Reply be agreed to—put and passed.

Ordered—That the Address be presented to His Excellency, by Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, on Tuesday, 11th July, at 3 o'clock p.m.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 10th July, 1893.

Arrangements for Steamers to call at Ports Headland and Condon — Inspector at East Kimberley and Pleuro-Pneumonia—Closing of Old and Opening of New Cemeteries at Perth — Transport Rates on Great Southern Railway—Completion and Opening of Beverley-Broome Hill Telegraph — Introduction of Legislation *re* Branding of Export Jarrah and Karri Timber—Leave of Absence to Member for the Murchison—Treasury Bills Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR STEAMERS TO CALL AT PORTS HEADLAND AND CONDON.

MR. RICHARDSON, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier,—

1. What steps the Government proposed taking with a view to granting the prayer of a petition numerously and influentially signed by settlers, miners, and residents on the DeGrey, Marble Bar, and Nulla-

gine, asking for arrangements to be made with steamers to call periodically at Ports Headland and Condon for the landing and shipping of cargo and passengers.

2. Whether the Government had resolved to declare Port Headland a port for the landing and shipping of cargo.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied :—

1. The Government have not yet done anything in the matter.
2. No new contract for mail service on the coast has yet been entered into, and it is doubtful if the steamers would enter Condon and Port Headland without a further and more accurate survey being made; and, besides, no arrangements have yet been made for landing, lighterage, etc.
3. The Government have not yet been in a position to declare Port Headland a port for landing and shipping cargo, but hope to have a survey made on the first opportunity.
4. The Government urged the Admiralty to make the survey when H.M.S. "Penguin" was on the coast, but without success.

STOCK INSPECTOR AT EAST KIMBERLEY, AND PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

MR. A. FORREST, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether the Government intended to appoint an Inspector for the East Kimberley Division of the colony, to inspect all stock entering the colony, as a precaution against the introduction of pleuro-pneumonia.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied : The Government are making inquiries as to whether a qualified person is available near the boundary line, at a moderate expense.

CLOSING OF OLD AND OPENING OF NEW CEMETERIES AT PERTH.

MR. A. FORREST, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier,—

1. When the Government intended to make the road from Hay Street West to the site of the new cemetery, as promised.