

we shall recognise that there is no need for any retrenchment. At all events before we decide on retrenchment we must be thoroughly satisfied that we are not retrenching at the expense of the efficiency of any of the State departments. If there are any wasters, or any unemployed in the public service, I say the Public Service Commissioner, or the Minister controlling a department, ought not to hesitate to take action in regard to that department. We must have our service as efficient as possible, and whilst we desire to give adequate value for services rendered, we desire to have adequate service for the value given. Then we have to consider in the question of retrenchment whether we cannot pay too cheaply for the able conduct of the affairs of our departments. With the proposal to tax unimproved land values I scarcely need say I am heartily in accord, and I hope when this proposal comes down at least it will be a proposal that will be of some practical utility as far as the country is concerned. As to the loan policy of the Government, I have no serious apprehension as to this particular line of policy, because I believe the fact of spending loan moneys on such works as are enumerated in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor completely safeguards the State and secures us against the possibility of unfair expenditure. What strikes me at the present time is that it is clearly the duty of members of Parliament and the people of the State to recognise that we have in our province one of the most wonderful heritages in the Commonwealth of Australia. We have practically unlimited possibilities in our great natural resources, and all we require is a wise, settled, progressive Government. From the people we ask for support and confidence, indomitable energy and industry, which are essential to the promotion and steady progress and the well-being of our people; and with these it is possible for us to make our State what it is destined to be, one of the brightest jewels in the crown of empire.

MR. A. MALE (Kimberley): I had no intention of speaking this evening, as I am suffering from a rather bad cold, and in fact my only excuse for speaking at all on the Address-in-Reply is the fact that I and one of the too few members who repre-

sent that vast and valuable portion of the State known as the great North-West and Kimberley. I would like to point out that owing to the resignation of the member for Pilbarra there are at the present time only three members in the House who represent that vast portion of the State, and for that reason I shall confine my remarks as much as possible to matters affecting the North. In the first place I would like to point out that I regret, and I think the people of the North regret, the fact that in the constitution of the present Ministry no direct representation has been given to the North, and we rather regret that fact for the reason that the ex-Premier when forming his Cabinet gave us direct representation in the Ministry, an honour that has seldom if ever before been extended to the North. Perhaps that may not be such a great detriment to that portion of the State, but at the same time we cannot help recognising the fact when we analyse the Ministry that we cannot find any Minister with a real or personal knowledge of the North. In fact I doubt very much if any of the Ministers has travelled farther along the north coast than Geraldton. In pointing this out I do not wish to imply that the Ministry by any means are going to neglect the North, for I firmly believe they will to the best of their knowledge do all that is necessary for its development and improvement; but I only point that out to emphasise the fact that without any direct knowledge of the North we can hardly expect that amount of attention which we undoubtedly deserve. We are told that a number of Bills are to be submitted to this House for our consideration, and amongst them will be a Bill for amending the Constitution, and under that I would like to point out the fact, which I have already referred to, of the poor representation of the North in this House. Perhaps from a population point of view we have as much as we deserve. I do not think we can look upon it as being the only factor when we consider the vast area involved, the different industries that are concerned, and the slow means of communication throughout that portion of the State. Under these circumstances we have some justification for referring to the fact of our poor representation.

Let us take Kimberley alone with its something like 1,000 miles of coast line, and its population scattered hundreds of miles inland: it seems to me perfectly impossible for any one man to properly represent and look after the interests of that district. It would take months to go all over that district and get familiar with the different portions of it, and it seems to me hardly fair to expect one man to undertake all that and at the same time to try and do a fair thing to the whole. We have heard a lot about the construction of light railways and the development of agricultural areas, timber areas, and so forth, but we hear nothing at all about the opening up of the great trunk road to the North. There is some slight mention of it in the Speech of the Governor, in which he refers to the fact that—

Strong representations have from time to time been placed before the Imperial authorities regarding the urgent necessity for a proper survey of the North-West coast of the State, and my Ministers are at present giving farther attention to this matter, with a view of securing the assistance of the Admiralty at the earliest possible date.

That is satisfactory, and I trust it will not be left to drop. The ocean is our great trunk road to the North, and I think we have a right to demand the same consideration as is required by the more favoured centres of the South and of the Goldfields. The want of proper and complete surveys has been responsible for numerous accidents on our coasts. I am glad to say we have not had to report the loss of life, but at the same time we have had to report the loss of valuable property. Therefore, it is very necessary that surveys should be effected. In addition to these surveys there is the matter of the lighting of our coast, and I regret to say that no mention has been made in the Governor's Speech in reference to this. I regret it for one reason, that I think at the present time we are losing our golden opportunity, an opportunity which will probably never occur again. I believe it is the intention of the Federal authorities to, at a very early date, take over the whole of the management of the lighting of the coasts of Australia, in which case it will probably take them a year or two to get the department in order, and then when they have money to spend on the lighting of the coast, I do

not think much will be spent on our coast, but it will be spent on the coasts of those States where they have the thickest population. If we take our own coast line from Dongarra to the north-east extremity of the West Australian border, a distance of some 3,300 miles, we find we have 23 lights. Eight of these lights are mere lanterns or jetty lights. As to the 15 remaining, with the exception of three they are only port lights; and that gives us three coast lights in a distance of 3,300 miles, and it is a noticeable fact that the farther north we get from Fremantle the more the strength of these lights diminishes. At Rottneet we have a 45,000 candle power, at Geraldton 20,000 candle power, at Cossack 2,500, and then anything is good enough for Kimberley and the rest of the coast farther north. I think that when we consider that the trade of the North is increasing every day, that the passenger traffic is getting more and more, and that large steamers are travelling up and down our coast with valuable cargoes, the members for the North are justified in demanding that reasonable and proper facilities should be granted to afford a safe passage up and down the coast. I may point out that the exports out of the State from the more northern ports during the last three years, according to the figures given by the Federal authorities, ran into more than £1,100,000, and then when we consider that the amount that came to Fremantle from those ports last year alone comprised over 20,000 head of cattle—brought down for the metropolitan and goldfields markets—and 100,000 sheep, these figures, I think, will show that the trade of the coast demands some consideration. I am pleased to say that provision is to be made for improvements and additions to the North-West tramways. The Premier, in his Bunbury speech, referred to the fact that criticisms had been made of the works of the Public Works Department, and I think that in that respect the North perhaps can speak rather feelingly; I know I can speak feelingly myself. Only a few weeks ago, when I was in Broome, the tram ran off the line three times between Broome and the jetty. A short time ago I was at Wyndham. There I saw one of the piles of the jetty eaten right off, and the pile

was simply wobbling about. These facts are small in themselves, yet I think they speak rather forcibly as regards the Public Works Department in the North. The Governor in his Speech refers to the fact that it will be necessary for Ministers to effect all possible economies. I would also like to point out the fact that "a stitch in time saves nine," and it is not altogether economy to try and cut down expenditure at the expense of public works already in existence. It is not economy to let our tramways, jetties, or public buildings go to rack and ruin.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

It is very essential that they should be properly maintained, and it seems to me that for the true and economical working of the North it will be necessary for the Works Department to have some re-organisation of their system there. When we find buildings that have been constructed of wood and iron—as buildings in the North have to be—left exposed to the extremes of the tropical climate, left for a period of six years without being repainted and done up, it stands to reason that they must go to rack and ruin, and it is necessary for the Works Department to take steps to look after these buildings. To do that it will probably be necessary to give a much larger grant for their upkeep. It will also be necessary to provide more supervision to look after these works. At the present time we find them with one officer who is supposed to look after the whole of the buildings of the Public Works Department from Carnarvon to the Far North, a task which on the face of it is absurd. It takes that officer all his time to travel over the vast areas there, and he has not only a coast line of some thousands of miles, but has inland places. He has Hall's Creek, Marble Bar, and all round there to look after at the same time. It simply means that when he lets work in one place there is no supervision over that work, and when it is completed he has to wire to a postmaster, magistrate, or some other official who has no knowledge of public works, to find out if this work has been constructed, and payments have to be made on the word of this postmaster or other official person. It seems to me that for the true economic working of the North it should either be

divided into two or more districts, or an officer should be given supervisors capable of going round and supervising new work and looking after old work already in existence. In his policy speech the Premier made allusion to the Pilbarra Railway, but no reference is made to it in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. I trust that this matter will not be left to drop. The subject of the Pilbarra Railway has been before the public for a long while, and it is quite time it should be brought to some definite conclusion. Probably this matter has been treated from a wrong point of view in some respects. In my opinion the public have been considering rather too much the merits of Cossack and Port Hedland, and whilst considering the respective merits of those places have failed to give due consideration to the miners who have been requiring the railway. What I think is required is a railway from Pilbarra to the coast: it does not matter what portion of the coast it touches, as long as it is a suitable place. Having decided, as I think has already been decided several times, that such a railway is justifiable, the route may in my opinion be left to the experts, namely the Government engineers. I really think that if the people in Cossack and Port Hedland had considered more the interests of the miners and not so much their own respective ports, the chances are that the railway would by this time have been an accomplished fact. In connection with that railway—and as I take it with all mining railways—it must be more or less of a speculative nature, and under these circumstances I think all that is required is a narrow-gauge railway, to be built at half the cost of the standardised railways such as tenders were called for a short time ago; tenders which included the construction of large stations and other items which could very easily be left out of consideration at Pilbarra. It seems to me rather a matter for regret that the present Colonial Treasurer, when acting as Minister for Public Works, was unable to take that contemplated trip of his to the North, together with the Engineer-in-Chief. [Interjection.] That is quite probable, but even in spite of the broken bottles the people would favour what few visits they could get from southern

members as well as southern Ministers, and they had anticipated some good results from such a visit. The fact remains that more good can be done by a personal sighting of things than can often be gained from quires of foolscap; and even now, if it is not possible for the present Minister for Works to make that contemplated trip, I trust that he will before long be able to see his way clear to allow the Engineer-in-Chief to make a trip to the Far North, so that he will be able to see for himself the nature of the public works of the North, and will then be much better able to cope with requisitions which come down for farther works. I am pleased to see that provision has been made for the completion of the rabbit-proof fence; also for a Number 3 fence from Warra Warra to the coast near Northampton. It is a matter of great regret that no provision apparently so far has been made to save Kimberley from the rabbits. At the present time the fence running from Eucla to the North-West coast can only be looked upon as a track on which the rabbits can run straight into the West Kimberley District. As soon as they touch the fence from the east they simply run along the fence as fast as they can, and it seems to me that it will not be very long before they are into the Kimberley country, if some attempt is not made to stop them. Properly to block them would be a very big undertaking; that is, to run a fence right across to the South Australian border. But I think it is quite necessary that some provision should be made to check them—to put up a curb fence, perhaps, of some two or three hundred miles into the desert, to try by that means to turn them back. When we consider that the whole of the beef supply of the south and of the goldfields comes from Kimberley, when we consider that there are millions of acres of land up there capable of carrying stock, I think it is quite a fair thing to ask that the Kimberley districts should be protected; for it is very certain that if the rabbits get there that country will be practically ruined. It seems to me that a question of that kind is quite as important to the State as the fostering of the agricultural areas and the building of spur lines. I am pleased to see that the Government are

going on with the pioneering work of artesian boring right throughout the North-West. This work, which has been started to the north of Carnarvon, has been crowned with success at Broome, and for that town solves the question of water supply, which has been one of serious moment to it for some time past. I trust that the success which the bores have attained there will be the forerunner of their farther success in the North, where at the present time water is badly required in the dry areas. The Governor, in his Speech, refers to the fact that rains have fallen in the North; but that, unfortunately, does not apply to the Far North, the Kimberley districts, which are experiencing a dry season following on a dry season, with the result that where people have water now the feed is all done, and where they have good feed they have no water. It is in these dry districts that we hope to see the artesian bores. By getting a good supply in these areas it will be possible for the country to carry not only the present stock, but hundreds and thousands of stock in addition. As a representative of the pearling industry, it may be advisable to say a few words, although there is really not much to say. At the present time the pearling industry is in anything but a flourishing condition, owing to the low prices ruling. But the pearl-ers do endeavour to assist themselves before they come to the Government for assistance. At the present time they have decided to send a representative to Europe, to see whether they can find new markets and improve the present market for their commodity. The only manner in which we do hope the Government will assist us is by introducing a Bill to deal with illicit pearl-buying on our coast; and if they do that, it will be of great and material assistance to the pearl-ers in keeping down a vice that is getting very prevalent in the North-West. Land settlement in the North has been referred to. This is a phase of settlement which will have to come; but I doubt if the time is just yet. There is no doubt that the millions of acres of rich land in the North will have to be developed. Already we have had small instances of what can be done there. At Sunday Island samples of cotton have been produced which are equal to anything that can

be required. At Beagle Bay, some years ago good samples of tobacco were grown by the Trappists who were residing there; and although they did not actually smoke the leaf themselves, they were able to supply the tobacco required by the natives. At the same place there is a fine banana plantation. Cocoanuts have been in full bearing in the North for several years, and there is no doubt that much might be done to cultivate tropical crops if suitable labour could be found and suitable areas provided. It seems to me that some small amount might well be spent in experimental work in the North, to find out what really are suitable crops for the climate. The mineral resources of the North, no doubt, will prove to be of great value; and I think that we are justified in asking the Government to give all possible assistance to prospectors and others who are willing to risk life and capital. I should like to refer to the matter of protection to settlers in the North. We continually hear complaints of trouble with the natives. They spear white men and others; hence the settlers require some consideration. A short time ago a case was heard at Wyndham, in which a native was prosecuted for the murder of a white man. At the preliminary hearing the native was convicted of murder, and a Judge was sent to try the case. Counsel was sent to defend the native, but unfortunately no counsel was sent for the prosecution; and on a question of law this native ultimately got off. The people of East Kimberley feel very keenly that this miscarriage of justice has let loose what to them is an apparent murderer; and they demand that for the future skilled prosecution shall be provided where skilled defence is provided. It is, as a rule, quite as difficult for the settlers to provide skilled prosecution as it is for the native to provide skilled defence. In fact, at the present time it is more difficult, as the Aborigines Board is prepared to provide skilled defence for natives. The settlers only ask for fair play; and I think that those who have to risk their lives in these far-back places are justified in asking for that. I am glad to note that the Government are prepared to adopt a progressive policy, and are not afraid to borrow a certain amount of

money for pushing on the works necessary for the development of the industries of this great State. It is quite possible that, owing to the deficit which has to be faced, it will be necessary for some new form of taxation to be imposed; but at the same time, the natural progress of this great State, combined with the economical working of the various departments, will do much to reduce that deficit, and will probably prevent any very severe increase of taxation. Although perhaps not agreeing with the Government on all the points of their policy, I trust they will receive that amount of support which will enable them to further the best interests of this great State, and to develop the latent wealth contained therein.

On motion of MR. GORDON, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned a 9:55 o'clock, until the next day.

### Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 11th July, 1906.

	PAGE
Questions: Railways Arbitration Award	349
Timbers of W.A., how Disparaged	350
Briquette Manufacture	350
Mining Conditions, as to Forfeiture	350
Cattle Dipping, Results	351
Timber Industry, how Assisted	351
Gold-stealing (alleged), Particulars	351
Public Battery, Moutagu Range	351
Financial Position, Treasury Results	352
Bill: Police Offences, 1s.	352
Address-in-Reply, debate eighth day	352
Explanations: Coal Supply and Prices	392

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAYS ARBITRATION AWARD.

MR. H. BROWN: I beg to ask the question standing in my name; but