

our best. And finally I wish to say that just as soon as you think you can do better, you may have this seat as far as I am concerned.

MR. DIAMOND: Thank you.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH (Wellington): Like the hon. member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth), I think the Governor's Speech has emanated from a good many brains. I wish to put in my claim to be considered the originator of certain of the good points of the Speech; but I decline to father those points which I consider to be detrimental to the welfare of the State. I am glad of the reference to a Public Works Committee. The proposal to establish this should meet with the approval of both sides of the House. The Public Service Act should be brought into line with the Public Service Acts of the Eastern States, where civil servants get their advancement by examination. As regards the Roads Boards Act, I think that instead of its being amended, a new measure altogether should be introduced. In my travels through the south-western districts I heard great complaints as to the confusion occasioned by the various amendments of the Act; and I was requested to urge that a totally new Act should be brought in as soon as possible. I am pleased to see that the Industrial Arbitration Act is to be amended, and I trust that the House will pass such a measure as will render strikes and lock-outs impossible. I do not favour Conciliation Boards: we should have only an Arbitration Court. From experience I know that the more men and employers look at their respective sides of a question, the harder that question becomes to settle. I consider that the establishment of an Arbitration Court only will give the employer and employee a very much better chance of settling their disputes. I am pleased by the statement in His Excellency's Speech that economy is to be the first principle of the new Administration. Everyone must applaud such a policy. At the same time communication being so difficult both on the goldfields and in the south-western districts, it would in my opinion be a mistake on the part of Ministers to lock up the State Treasury altogether. Hon. members know that on the fields cartage costs from 1s. 6d. to 3s.

per ton per mile, and that in the south-west it is impossible to get about without roads and bridges. I consider that it would be wrong if Ministers, in order to secure an overflowing Treasury chest, should refuse to construct railways or roads or bridges. That would be a very great mistake.

MR. OATS: The Treasury chest is empty now.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: That may be so. For the goldfields a system of light railways might be introduced. By this means every mining centre of any importance whatever could be well served by lines costing not more than £1,000 to £1,200 per mile. Such railways might be built to any place offering a reasonable chance of traffic sufficient to pay working expenses and interest. If it were found that a line did not pay, it could be pulled up, at a cost not exceeding £50 per mile if the work is placed in proper hands. It is a shame, I consider, that places which under the altered circumstances created for them by a light line would have a fair chance of becoming flourishing mining centres or townships, should be deprived of this opportunity for a number of years when they could have it at so low a cost as £1,000 or £1,200 per mile. Where the Government make such a mistake in my opinion is by loading up their railways with unnecessary additions. I think the railway official goes to extremes in making his lines too costly. Under the system I will recommend, of course the railways would be shorn of all these decorative features with which the railway official loves to adorn his handiwork. I regret exceedingly there was no mention in the Speech of the appointment of a non-political head of the railways. It must be apparent, not only to this House but to everyone, that there exists in the Railway Department a lot of friction and discontent, and I consider the only way by which that can be overcome is to get the very best possible administrator for the work. No expense or no question as to salary within reason should be considered in obtaining the best man. I would not advocate three Commissioners, because there is a chance of one Commissioner shifting his responsibility on to the others. In England the general manager has sole control of every branch of the



business, and I do not see why that system should not obtain here. It is a great mistake for a State like this, with 180,000 people, to keep up too extensive a railway department such as obtains in this country. In reference to private enterprise I have very strong feelings. I consider that private enterprise has made Western Australia what it is to-day. After hearing the statement of the member for Cue (Hon. F. Illingworth), I may regard this as one of the leading States in the world, seeing that we have a revenue of over £3,000,000 for 182,000 people—something like £16 per head—and I say unhesitatingly that this is due to private enterprise. The goldfields should be considered the principal private enterprise in the State to-day, and no doubt that is the case, but there are other ventures in which private enterprise has been brought into use. There is the timber industry, and there are the warehouses and a number of other things, and last but not least the prospector is in my opinion as much a private venture as any of the others. The railways could be properly and profitably worked by private enterprise, if satisfactorily safeguarded in the interests of the State. Where a concession was asked for from this House of Parliament, provision could be made whereby, in the event of the venture proving a profitable one and it being thought advisable to take possession of it in the interests of the State, that venture could be taken over at a fixed rate, so that the State would not have to pay an exorbitant price for the goodwill. Broadly speaking, I am in favour of railways belonging solely and absolutely to the State. But there are instances in which, in the event of the State not feeling disposed or the Government thinking itself not warranted to take control of the railways, private enterprise should be allowed to step in, and two railways I may bring within this category are the Coolgardie-Esperance Bay railway and the Collie Coalfields railway. I believe that the Collie Coalfields railway would be better served by a private line than by a Government line, because under the Commonwealth Constitution, as far as I can read, the coal will have to be carried here, whether it comes from Newcastle or Victoria, at the same rate as that at which we carry our own coal. It

does not matter which way the line goes, if it be built by the State this Collie coal will not have the same show as it would have in the event of the line being built by private enterprise. The member for Mt. Burges (Mr. F. Reid) the other evening was referring to the Kurrawang tramway, and said he hoped the Government would see fit to shut it up. Being one of the originators of that tramway and having spent something like £53,000 in that venture, I personally would be very sorry if the Government thought themselves warranted in shutting this thing up. It would not only affect my company, but it would affect the mines very much more in the long-run. At the present time the mines pay, including shunting charges, 10s. a truck from Kurrawang to Golden Gate; 29s. a truck, including shunting, from Gloady's Siding to Golden Gate, or an increase of 19s. per truck, nearly 4s. per ton; from Borrabbin to Golden Gate they would have to pay, including shunting charges, 42s. 6d. a truck; and from Southern Cross they would have to pay, including shunting charges, 73s. 6d. a truck, or 1s. a truck more than we get for the delivery of wood in Kalgoorlie. That is for freight only. It does not matter whether a line is laid down by the company or by the Government, but if the wood is to be obtained, it will be taken from round about such centres as are thrown open, and I contend that as far as the Kurrawang tramway and the Kurrawang Tramway Co. are concerned, only that has been done. Reserves have been made, and the timber has been taken from without those reserves, that is to say the Kurrawang people were allowed to cut timber where there was no reserve. I regret exceedingly that no mention was made with reference to the drainage of the South-West. Promises have been given from time to time that a main drain would be cut to relieve the waters that should flow into the Mandurah Estuary and the Leischenault Estuary. I do not blame this Government, and of course it would be absurd to do so.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: It is in the Loan Bill.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: I am glad to hear it, and I hope the Government will make ample provision so that this drain will for ever relieve the farmers



who have taken up their land on the assurance—and in fact in some cases the drain has been shown on the plan—that the main drain will be made. For years, ever since I have been here, survey parties have off and on been surveying round about this area. Some thousands of pounds have been spent, but the farmer to-day is no nearer being relieved than he was eight years ago. I tried to go through this area some six weeks ago, and I was almost bogged, buggy and horses. Instead of this area, this magnificent soil, in my opinion, being a splendid asset, it is nothing but a quagmire, and instead of its being lined with homesteads and the land being cultivated, there is nothing but water all over the place, and it is difficult to get from one part to another.

A MEMBER: How many acres?

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: I should say it runs 30 miles by eight or 10. I regret the cavalier manner in which the Premier treated the question of fruit importation. No doubt the Premier has good reasons for removing the embargo on the importation of apples; but judging from the manner in which the question has been treated generally, members have not had that experience of the codlin moth which others have had, or they would not talk in such a light tone on the subject. I have had five years of it in Tasmania, and I can assure members that after paying expenses of looking after the orchard, I was out of pocket, and the only thing I could do with the orchard was to pull it up and burn it. It does not matter whether you work your orchard or not, you have to pay the State for inspection.

MR. MOORHEAD: Growers in Tasmania are exporting apples to London.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: That is so. It is contended, and fairly contended, that Tasmania can produce apples and export them; but if you go to Tasmania and see how the orchardist lives, you will ascertain that it is a bare existence, and that instead of a man getting 100 per cent. or 90 per cent. for his apples, which would be a fair thing, he gets from 30 per cent. to 40 per cent. I could give you an instance of a relation of mine in Victoria, who employs a man and two boys, one of the latter being 18 years of age and the other 20, to work that orchard,

and he took £80 a year in relation to the orchard worked by that man and two boys. Is that a fair thing? Instead of that, without the codlin moth he would easily have taken off £250.

MR. MOORHEAD: What about the consumer.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: I am not here to advocate that there should be exorbitant prices paid by the consumer, but whatever is done, let the codlin moth be kept out, and I think that with proper inspection the codlin moth can be kept out. I say farther, if it be found that the cost to the consumer is too great, let the State and not the consumer pay the cost of inspection. The House would have overlooked any departure from the lines laid down by the Ministers, that they are not going to expend any money unless Parliament sanctions it. With reference to the rabbits, it is such a very important question that the Government might have used one of those forms—I forget what it is called. [MEMBERS: Form "J."] I think they might have incurred expenditure to the extent of £20,000 or £30,000 to combat the pest.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The authorisation was passed four years ago, but the Minister neglected to carry out the work.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: Then he wants "a doing." I dare say many members have seen the devastation wrought by rabbits, and one cannot realise it unless he has seen it for himself. It will be found here, as in the Eastern States, that the occupier of the small holding will be able to deal with the rabbit question much better than the occupier of a large one, and I am of opinion you will find that instead of one fence being erected, you will have to erect two parallel fences about five chains apart, with a cross fence every 20 chains, and an inspector to ride up and down for 50 miles. It means a big expense; but £150,000 or £200,000 spent now will be better than a million or a million and a-half spent a few years hence. I wish the member for East Perth (Hon. W. H. James) were in his place at present, because I want to take him to task for arrogating to himself, as I think he did, the post of master of ceremonies in this House, by saying on which side members should sit and where they should not sit. I claim that I have



as much right as the member for East Perth to choose the side on which I shall sit, without his taking on himself to say I must go over there or stop here.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: Rub it in.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: The Premier has said he will not and does not want our support.

THE PREMIER: When did I say that?

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: The other night. The Premier said he did not want my support. Now he has got to have my support, because I am going to support him as far as I can. (General laughter.)

MR. T. F. QUINLAN (Toodyay): Reference was made by the Colonial Treasurer to the fact, as stated by him, that he was unaware as to the position members occupied in this House; in other words, that he could only find a majority in front of the present Government, and failed to find an Opposition. I have no hesitation in saying I am an Oppositionist in the extreme; and while I have a friendly regard towards the members of the present Government, yet on political matters I am sure they will agree to differ with me. I intend to support them, although an Oppositionist, in anything I consider to be for the well-being of this country; but I at once declare that I resent the attitude the Premier took the other evening, when he addressed hon. members, alluding particularly to members on this (Opposition) side, by telling us he did not want our support, and that we had been blind followers of the past Government. Although the Premier made those references to this side of the House in particular, I remember that when he sat on this side as leader of the Opposition he professed to believe in the existence of a healthy Opposition. I hope he still retains that opinion, and he may then realise that it may be to the interest of the Government and to the best interest of the country that there should be a healthy Opposition. When the Premier had spoken in that manner regarding members on the Opposition side, he also said that if the Opposition would not move a vote of no-confidence in the Government, he would ask some member on his side to move a vote of confidence in himself. I now ask the Premier, in reply to his

challenge, to do so. Let him get someone to move that motion.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: He is not "game" enough.

MR. QUINLAN: I am prepared to give reasonable support to the present Government; I believe also we should give them a fair trial; and if they are found to be worthy of the confidence of the people, although I sit on the Opposition side, I shall endeavour to do as they professed to do in the past, that is I shall criticise their measures, and will also give them a fair support when I think it is due. I agree with the reference made in the Speech to the death of Her Majesty the Queen, and to the accession of King Edward VII.; and also I agree with the references made to the forthcoming visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall. I mention this for the reason that I have been said to be a pro-Boer. On what grounds that is said I cannot understand; for I am just as loyal as any member in this State or in Australasia to the throne and the person of the Sovereign, but I am not one who panders to any party or to any person. I believe in being loyal in every sense; but I must express my opinion with regard to the expenditure which is intended to be made of £25,000 in connection with celebrating the visit of their Royal Highnesses. I do not think we are justified, seeing that the Government contend they have an empty Treasury, in spending £25,000 on temporary structures, when the Government might have done something of a permanent nature to signalise this visit by erecting a hospital for children or a new asylum. As to wasting £25,000 on frivolity, I am not in accord with that. We have men in the railway department who are now asking for an increase of a shilling a day in wages; and we are told the Government have not the means to pay it, or that the men shall not get it. So far as my sympathies are concerned, they are with the men; and though I think the men are somewhat to blame for their attitude, that there is blame on both sides, yet I also think that if more tact had been used by the Government, they might have settled this difficulty some days ago. I am sorry indeed to have to refer to the loss we have sustained in the death of our late and esteemed friend, Mr. Alexander