

dence they may promote the permanent welfare of the State and the social betterment of its people.

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

The PRESIDENT: For the sake of greater accuracy I have obtained from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor copies of the Speech which he has been pleased to deliver. These will be distributed amongst hon. members.

BILL—TRADE UNIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [3.16]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill entitled, "An Act to amend the Trade Unions Act, 1902."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

Hon. W. H. KITSON (West) [3.17]: I move—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to us:— May it please Your Excellency. We the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

It will be generally agreed that the Speech of His Excellency discloses that the Government are fully alive to the many pressing problems confronting this great State of ours at the present time. I desire to refer to two or three of those problems that appear to me to be of the greatest importance at this juncture. First and foremost I would refer to the questions of immigration and land settlement. It will be agreed by all sections of the community that if this State is to make the progress we are justly entitled to expect it to make, it can only be achieved by an increase in our population, particularly in that of the rural and agricultural areas. The policy of past Governments regarding immigration has certainly had a beneficial effect on the State, and I am pleased to know that the present Government intend to carry on the same policy, particularly regarding the group settlement scheme. As one who has had a little experience in endeavouring to carve out a home in a heavily timbered district, I firmly be-

lieve the group settlement system to be the only one by which our heavily timbered areas will be settled for agricultural purposes. At the same time, while to date the system has been successful up to a certain point, there are several things that will tend to make it more successful in future. No doubt the decision of the present Government to appoint a Royal Commission for the purpose of inquiring into the whole question of group settlement will prove beneficial to the State generally, and in particular to those people who have been brought here to make new homes for themselves in this wonderful land of ours. With a group settlement scheme must go necessarily a scheme for closer settlement. I am particularly pleased to note that the present Government have determined that it is necessary to introduce legislation during the first session of Parliament in order to achieve closer settlement in those areas that are adjacent to existing railways and have the advantage of other facilities. One of the reasons why we have not made more progress in Western Australia during recent years has been the fact that there is far too much land adjacent to existing railways that has not gone into production to the extent those lands are capable of. Therefore I welcome legislation in the form of an amendment of the Land Tax and Income Tax Act, as well as legislation for closer settlement purposes. This will mean that it will not be necessary for new arrivals in Western Australia, nor yet for those at present resident within the State to go out into the back blocks many miles away from existing railway facilities. Wherever a community is settled far from existing railways it is only natural for that community to expect, and those people have the right to expect it too, to be provided with facilities enabling them to make a living. In the past it has been necessary to supply people with these facilities, and we know that the expense has been so great that for many years it is not to be expected that we shall secure any adequate return for the expenditure incurred. It will be generally conceded that our problems to-day are chiefly connected with our primary industries. I regret very much that one of our primary industries that in years gone by has been one of the main assets of Western Australia—I refer to the mining industry—is in what has been termed a state of decline. The decision of the Government that a Royal Commission shall be appointed, as a result of which it is hoped that means will be devised by which the mining industry will be revived, is indeed pleasing. A large number of families have been dependent upon the mining industry for a livelihood, and, as we know from experience during the last few years, many have found it necessary to leave the

mining districts, and, in many cases, the State, in order to make a living elsewhere. Consequently anything that may be done to introduce migrants to Western Australia will be nullified if we find that, on the other hand, residents of many years standing are compelled to leave Western Australia simply because the industry in which they have been engaged is passing through a period of decline. I hope that as the result of the legislation it is intended to introduce, and of the Royal Commission that is to be appointed, there will be a period of greater prosperity for the mining industry and the people engaged in it. It must be pleasing to all sections of the community when they remember the bounteous rains we have had during the past few days. Up to a little while ago there was a feeling that all would not be well with that other great primary industry of ours, agriculture, particularly as it affected the growing of wheat. The latest reports to hand show that the position is particularly encouraging, and the farming community can look forward to a better harvest and brighter prospects for the forthcoming season than was possible a week ago. There is one other point regarding our primary industries that particularly affects the development of our great North-West. It is encouraging to know that optimistic reports have been received regarding the possibilities of developing our far North-West by means of cotton growing. In the growing of cotton we will have an asset that will prove in years to come of inestimable benefit to us. With proper encouragement it will be possible for large areas in the North-West to be opened up for the production of cotton, and we shall be able to produce cotton which will enable us to compete in the markets of the world. I trust that as the result of the deliberations of this Parliament, every encouragement will be given to our people to open up the North-West, especially that area respecting which such good results have been obtained so recently. I trust that by this means we shall have a white population in the North-West able to prosper and produce those goods that are so essential for people in other parts of the world. In addition to our primary industries the establishment of secondary industries in Western Australia is a matter of great moment. It will not be of much use to this State if by immigration and other means we increase our population and find that our young men have no outlet for their energies in skilled trades or callings. I hope the Government will give serious consideration to the fostering of secondary industries within our own borders, so that our youths will have an opportunity of becoming tradesmen instead of merely ordinary or common labourers, as so many

of them have to do to-day. From my own experience I know that large numbers of our youths have to leave Western Australia after having been provided by the State with a fairly good education, simply because there is no opportunity for them here. If we are to make a success of Western Australia we must see that that position is rectified and that our youths have opportunities to become artisans rather than mere labourers. If that be achieved the results will prove beneficial to our people and to the State. I note from His Excellency's Speech that the expenditure on education during the past year was particularly large, when we compare it with the population of the State, and I also note with pleasure that, with the establishment of another high school four of these institutions have been opened since the Perth Modern School was started. To my way of thinking education is of the greatest importance, and the question of expense should not stand in the way. In view of the congested state of many of our schools, the Government should consider the advisableness of establishing further high schools in various districts, but particularly in my district, where a majority of the schools are so congested that it is impossible for the children to receive the attention, and therefore, the education to which they are certainly entitled. Children from the Fremantle district desirous of attending a high school have to travel to Perth. The establishment of a high school in the Fremantle district would also make things easier for the other schools in the district, because at present many of the younger children have to travel from the outskirts to the centre of the town in order to receive primary education. I trust this matter will receive the consideration of the Government, because I am sure that any expenditure incurred for education will be amply repaid in future. I was pleased to note that amongst the Bills to be introduced during the session are several dealing with the industrial laws. Several years ago this State led the world in industrial legislation, but unfortunately during recent years various countries have forged ahead of us in this respect. Consequently, the intention to introduce measures of an industrial character during this session meets with my especial approval. A young State such as ours cannot do better than to insist upon the conditions under which the workers have to earn a living being made as good as possible, in order to secure from the workers the benefit of their best efforts. Mention is made in the Speech of amending the Arbitration Act. While we have not experienced many serious disputes during the last year or so, this has been due, not to the existing legislation, but in spite of it. Our legisla-

tion should have been amended years ago and brought into line with modern requirements. Reference is made to the fact that the greater part of the Fremantle harbour has been dredged to a depth of 30 feet, and that the Special Service Squadron of the British Navy, which recently visited our shores, was berthed in the harbour with very little difficulty. The facilities provided, too, were spoken of by the visitors in the highest terms. Though Fremantle is the principal port of the State, the first Commonwealth port of call for vessels coming from the Old Country and the last port of call for vessels proceeding thither. It is not complete in the facilities provided. Any harbour, no matter how well situated, cannot be considered complete unless it has facilities for the docking and repairing of any vessel calling there. I trust that the Government, when considering the question of harbour facilities, will recognise the urgent necessity for establishing at Fremantle a dock capable of accommodating the largest vessel trading to our shores. During the last few weeks I have visited several hospitals, both in the metropolitan area and in country districts, and in most instances those hospitals were nothing like what they should be. The conditions under which the nurses and the staffs have to work are so bad that no one should be expected to work under them, and if they are so bad for the nurses and staffs, what shall we say of the conditions under which the inmates have to be treated? It is the bounden duty of the Government to see that better facilities are provided. Where necessary, new buildings should be erected, and where there are no hospitals at present, steps should be taken to supply the want without delay. Some parts of the State are crying out for hospital accommodation, parts of the State in which there reside men engaged in industry peculiarly subject to accidents. I have already referred to the necessity for the Government fostering and encouraging secondary industries. Any country that has made great industrial progress during the last decade or so has done so only by reason of having made cheap power available. If steps were taken here to produce cheap electrical power, it would lead to an expansion of our industries and give them better opportunities to compete with similar industries in other parts of the Commonwealth and of the world. The Government should give early and serious consideration to some scheme for providing cheap electrical power. The problems of Western Australia at present can be reduced to one thing, and that is finance. The deficit on last year's operations was somewhat smaller than that of the previous year, but whether the deficit be increased or de-

creased, there are some things—a few of which I have outlined—which the Government must take into consideration, irrespective of their cost, and I trust that funds will be made available in order that some of these urgent needs may be supplied. There appears to be a commendable desire on the part of the Government to give effect to their policy, which was endorsed by the people at the recent elections, and which I think will, if given effect to, promote, in the words of the Speech, the permanent welfare of the State, and the social benefit of the people.

Hon. J. R. BROWN (North-East [3.40]): It affords me great pleasure to second the motion so ably moved by my colleague. I intended to touch on several items, but Mr. Kitson has traversed practically the whole of the Speech, and it is therefore not necessary for me to dwell upon the same matters. One of the subjects on which I intended to speak was immigration, but he has put the case so clearly that it is unnecessary to add more. The mining industry, however, will bear further reference. I believe the new Government will manifest greater interest in the gold-mining industry that has been displayed in the past. But for the gold produced in Western Australia, we would have a very small Perth to-day. Something like 190 million pounds' worth of gold has been produced, and some 38 million pounds has been distributed in dividends. Where would Western Australia have been but for this industry? I welcome the proposal of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to ascertain what is necessary to revive gold-mining, which has been in a decadent state for many years. Kalgoorlie, the centre of the great gold producing area, is going down day by day. People are leaving the town; they have to get out, though gold is still to be obtained. Now that we have a sympathetic Government we should consider the details of what is necessary to revive the industry. I was pleased to hear the reference to State insurance. Twelve or 15 months ago I was one of a deputation that waited on the previous Government and requested the introduction of State insurance. The Government of the day, however, considered it was impracticable, that it was a matter for the Federal Government and not for the State. Queensland did not wait for the Federal Government to undertake the insurance business. It went on its own, and the Queensland Government, by conducting their own insurance, have reduced fire premiums from 9s. to 6s., and other premiums have been proportionately reduced. The Government of that State, too, have derived considerable profit from the venture, something in the vicinity of £50,000 a year. Therefore our Government should do something in the same direction. In Queensland workmen's compensation goes hand in hand with State insurance, and great results have been achieved. Another thing I am pleased