

gether a million and a third of money, and I think we have made very great improvements with it. I believe that those who left the colony some years ago would hardly know the place. Would anyone, the most bigoted, the most unprogressive, say we would have been better off if we had not borrowed that money? I think that we have spent that money pretty well, altogether. We have something to show for it; we have improved our estate with it; and I can see no reason why, with our vast territory at our back and with its great resources, we cannot go on improving it, so long as the money to do so is obtained at a cheap rate and spent judiciously. Why should we be afraid of borrowing? The state of our finances justify it. Only last year, when there were no public works of any description going on, and the Midland railway was hung up, and everything was very dull, a year of unexampled depression, even last year we had a balance of £12,000 to our credit on the year's transactions.

MR. PARKER: Windfalls, in the shape of land sales. We shall not get £27,000 every year from Hampton Plains.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): I assure the House my hon. colleagues and myself have very carefully considered this question. We know the colony. All we ourselves possess is in it, and if it does not progress we shall not progress. We have no idea of leaving here in a day or two, and leave the colony to itself. Someone said to me the other day, "If this Loan Bill does not pass, I shall leave the colony." Another one told me, "If that bill passes, I shall leave the colony." I say, whether the Bill passes or not, I am not going to leave the colony, and I do not think any of my colleagues will leave. I think we know the requirements of the colony, and we know its resources, and what is more, we know the individuals who compose the community. We know the people of the colony from one end of it to the other, and, as I have already said, we know the wants of the country; and I believe that if this policy which we ask members to give their assent to meets with the approval of Parliament, it will tend largely to the prosperity and advancement of the colony. I will conclude,

sir, in the words of His Excellency's Speech: "We confidently believe that the policy of public works now recommended to your honorable House will be productive of great benefit to the colony. It will, we are confident, attract population, develop our mineral resources, encourage the settlement of the land, greatly increase facilities of transit, and will be the means of placing the people of the colony in a position to develop its great and varied resources."

MR. DE HAMEL: I had hoped that the Premier would have thrown some light upon the basis upon which his loan policy is framed; but, after listening with great attention to the words of the Premier, I find myself in the same state of darkness as I have been in ever since the Government policy has been thrust upon us. I desire to show members that in the remarks I am about to offer I am not one of those opposed to a Loan Bill, but rather in favor of a Loan Bill, provided that the loan is to be prudently and wisely expended. The objection that I have to paragraphs 7, 8, and 9 of the Governor's speech, as representing the policy of the Government, is not against the raising of a loan, but to the way in which that loan is proposed to be dealt with. There have been several replies to the criticisms of the hon. member for York upon the loan policy of the Government, but no hon. member has touched the critical point. Not even the Premier himself has dealt with the critical point we have to decide in this House; and what I call the critical point is this: that we are asked to commit ourselves to a specified amount before deciding on the works to be carried out. We are asked to do more than this; we are asked to commit ourselves to works which the proposed loan will not and cannot possibly cover. All we are told about it, on the part of the leader of the Government is, that the Government estimate that the aggregate cost of these works will amount to the sum mentioned, £1,366,000. That is not a sufficient security for us. We feel that we ought to have something more than this to go upon. If satisfied that all the works mentioned in the Governor's Speech could be carried out for the amounts set against them—I speak for myself, and I believe for

all the members on this side of the House—we would all unanimously support the Government policy, and some of us would go further, and ask the Government to increase the amount, and increase it purely for colonisation purposes. This is one of the most important subjects which could possibly be brought before the colony and before Parliament at the present time, this question of colonisation, which is not even touched upon in the Governor's Speech. We are asked, without making the slightest provision for the introduction of a permanent class of colonists, without making any provision for permanently settling an increased population on the land, an increased body of taxpayers, — we are asked to double the public debt of the colony, and to add a burden upon us which may effectually prevent us from further borrowing in the future those sums which we ought to be in a position to borrow for colonisation purposes. Some members do not seem to agree with this idea of colonisation; yet, I would ask them to look at Queensland and see whether it was not her colonisation policy when she first got Responsible Government that led her into the position she now occupies. [Mr. SCOTT: What is immigration, but colonisation?] The hon. member asks what is immigration? We are told that the expenditure which is to be brought about if we carry out this public works policy will induce an influx of population. That is perfectly true. It will induce what my hon. friend calls immigration; it will undoubtedly bring to us a floating population, for those words uttered nineteen centuries ago are as true now as they were then—"Where the carcase is there also will the eagles be gathered together." So sure as we lay the golden bait for them, and so long as the golden syrup lasts, these people will undoubtedly be attracted to our shores and will remain with us. So long as we have the nuts to place before them they will crack them. But, as soon as the golden syrup is exhausted, and the last nut is cracked, they will spread their wings and fly away, and leave us nothing to show that they have been with us. What permanent benefit shall we derive from a floating population brought about by that sort of immigration? That is not colonisation. What

real advantage will this colony ever derive from any increase to its population unless it is a permanent population, settled on the soil? We cannot count upon a floating population, that is here today and gone tomorrow, to help us in sharing the extra burden of taxation which this new loan will cast upon us. We know very well that we do not now produce sufficient food supplies even for our present population; we have to import largely into this colony to supply the daily wants of our present population. What will be our position when we have an accretion in the shape of a floating population, unless hand in hand with it we undertake some scheme of colonisation and settlement? We shall simply be benefiting the other colonies, from whence we shall have to obtain our food supplies for these people who will come here and remain here only so long as we find the carcase for them. I say, sir, that the policy of the Government should be a policy of settling people on the soil, of developing agriculture, and, in connection with this, and at the same time, to adopt a spirited public works policy, and so attract population who will come and settle amongst us, and cast in their lot with us, and assist us in bearing the burden of taxation. But my main objection to the Ministerial policy is specially directed to this: we are asked to vote the money for these works before we decide upon the works that are to be carried out. [The PREMIER: Not at all.] The Premier says not at all. [The PREMIER: A Loan Bill will be brought in.] A Loan Bill will be brought in. But I understand we are to pass that Bill first, and afterwards settle upon the works to be carried out.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): Certainly not; the hon. member does not understand the intention of the Government. The schedule to the Loan Bill will enumerate all the works proposed to be undertaken. Afterwards, as required by the law of the land, there will have to be special Acts brought in dealing with the proposed railways, and describing the route and giving all other particulars, which will have to be settled by Parliament. But the money for each particular work included in the schedule of the Loan Bill will be voted upon that Bill.

MR. DE HAMEL: Precisely. We first pledge ourselves to the schedule, and then we are to be asked to pass a secondary Act and agree to the expenditure of the money we have already sanctioned by the Loan Bill. [The PREMIER: It is the same in the other colonies.] That is the policy with which I am finding fault. I think the House should have an opportunity first to decide upon the works which it desires to have carried out; then having settled upon these works, raise a loan which shall be sufficient to carry them out.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): So you will; the schedule to the Loan Bill will give you that opportunity.

MR. DE HAMEL: I was in hopes that the Government might have been induced to postpone the introduction of this Loan Bill, until they had first brought in a Public Works Bill, showing the works they proposed to carry out, placing against each work the amount they estimated it would cost, and giving the House some information as to how they arrived at that estimate; so that, having settled the works to be undertaken, we might join together, as we ought, and vote the necessary supplies to carry out those works upon which we were all agreed. Of course, the Government having apparently an enormous majority in this House will be quite free to carry out their own ideas, and will persist in doing so. But I do not think they will find that public opinion is with them in the course they propose to pursue. [Several hon. members: Question.] Public opinion will say that the proper and business-like course is to first settle the works you want to carry out, and then provide the funds with which to pay for them. We have heard from the Premier himself that this scheme of public works is a sop to provide something for almost every part of the colony. That is not my idea of a truly Government policy, nor does it seem to me a statesmanlike one. My notion is that we are not sent here to scramble and fight for plums for our own districts, but to work the greatest good we can for the colony at large, irrespective of our own little petty and local interests. That is the view I wish to take. Let us think of the good of our country first. Let local interests and local requirements be questions of purely

secondary consideration. If I saw a public work recommended which would benefit the whole colony and attract population, I would not ask in what district the money was to be expended, whether in the far North, the distant South, or in Perth or Fremantle. Sir, there is one question on which the Premier has touched and on which I desire to say a few words, and that is the question of harbor improvements. I submit that the proposed works to be covered by this loan cannot possibly be carried out for anything like the amount; they cannot be carried out under three times that amount. [The PREMIER: How do you know?] We are asked to include in this loan a certain amount for harbor improvements, and if we go in for harbor improvements they must be expensive to be of any value; and I should prefer to see the Government strike harbor improvements out of the loan altogether, and bring in a Harbor Trust Bill, giving power to every port to receive its own dues and raise its own loans, and effect its own improvements. A Harbor Trust is created in almost every port in all other parts of the civilised world, wherever there is a harbor worth having. Why not adopt the same course here? Reference has been made by the Premier and by other hon. members to the Busseton railway. For myself, I never will speak on a subject which I do not in the least understand. I know nothing of the country to be traversed and opened up by this railway, but I have arranged to see it before the House meets again next week, so that I may then be able to form some idea for myself as to the country that this proposed railway will run through. I am only sorry that other members would not in the same way satisfy themselves before they throw out wild remarks for which they are really hardly responsible. I refer to the remarks of the hon. member for De Grey, who told us with reference to General Booth's scheme of colonisation that if we introduce a scheme like that we should introduce the scum of London, who would be a perfect curse to the colony. I would ask the hon. member whether he has ever been in London, or knows anything about the scheme of which he talks. Knowing the people

and knowing something of that scheme myself, I say we could not get better colonists here than we could get introduced under that scheme of General Booth's. I shall give my utmost support to any well-considered scheme of colonisation, whether by General Booth or any other person, who will carry out a system of colonisation and settlement, not at our expense but the expense of others. One other point. The reduction of the franchise is not mentioned at all in the Governor's Speech, and it has not been referred to to-night in any way by the Premier. But the reduction of the franchise is one of the reforms that are called out for by the people of the colony—at any rate by the people in the South—I know nothing about the people at the North; but from here down South as far as Albany, the one cry, the one determination is to have a reduction of the franchise. [Several hon. members: Question.] I am sorry to say that this question is not even touched upon in the Speech, nor was it even referred to by the leader of the Government this evening. I can only regard this silence as an indication that the Government is opposed to any reduction in the franchise. It is on account of this, and because of the course they have pursued in asking us to pass a Loan Bill before we first settle upon the works to be carried out, that I find myself compelled to take my seat on the Opposition benches.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): You arranged all that long ago.

MR. TRAYLEN: I shall ask the indulgence of hon. members while I venture to offer a few remarks on His Excellency's speech. I am asking indulgence because I am new to this phase of political life, and not so well versed as I would like to be in political work, or as one ought to be in order to form correct opinions on subjects discussed here. I trust I shall not be misunderstood if I, in a kindly spirit, deprecate some of the epithets employed in the course of this debate. I have listened to such words as "coward," "rotten," and "bust up" (whatever that may mean); and I deprecate the use of such terms, because whatever personal consideration may have led members to accept a seat in this House when conferred on them by their con-

stituencies, I do think we all come here inspired with one common feeling of patriotism, and that it is unjust and unfair to each other to assume anything to the contrary. I think we should give each other credit for being honest in our expressions, honest in the convictions of our minds, and that being thus honest we ought not to be reproached (so to speak) for expressing ourselves either for or against any particular line of policy. We all start for one common goal of national prosperity, and I am firmly persuaded all here desire to start by the use of the same means—a loan for the carrying out of public works. Let me compliment the newly formed Ministry on one phase or one feature of the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor, as indicating the Ministerial policy. It has been called, and not altogether wrongly, a "sop" policy; but I do not think the word was intended to be used in any disrespectful sense; at any rate, I do not use it in a disrespectful sense, because to my mind this was exactly the kind of policy with which the Ministry should come before this House, as indicating that they recognise the fact that there are persons living in this colony outside the towns of Perth and Fremantle, or York, or Yilgarn. The distribution of the loan is so made as to give a considerable degree of satisfaction to nearly every constituency, except possibly that one which I have the honor to represent (Greenough). I see nothing here about that loop line from some part up the line or lower down the line to serve the Front Flats people. The results to be expected from this policy are, I think, rightly particularised in paragraph 10 of His Excellency's Speech, which says:—"My Ministers confidently believe that the policy of public works now recommended to your honorable House will be productive of great benefit to the colony. It will, they are confident, attract population, develop our mineral resources, encourage the settlement of the land, greatly increase facilities of transit, and will be the means of placing the people of the colony in a position to develop its great and varied resources." I am perfectly in accord with that paragraph. But we may attach different definitions and meanings to terms, and I am not able to go all the