

ally, from my own experience of municipal work I think no money that the Government has ever given away could be better spent than that spent in the various municipalities. It has always been well expended, and I should not be inclined to support a reduction or the abolition of the municipal subsidies. My own leanings are towards the land tax system of South Australia, where the tax is a halfpenny in the pound under £5,000 in value, and another halfpenny in the pound for over £5,000 in value. I think that provision should be made in the Act to allow that when an appeal is made by an owner against the valuator's estimate, the Government should have the option of purchasing at the owner's valuation. By that means I think that the State would see that the owners' valuations were not too low for taxing purposes. I should also favour a 50 per cent. increase in the tax on absentee owners. With regard to the reform of the Upper House, I am pledged to support a reduction of the franchise qualification from £25 to £15. Hon. members on the opposite side of the House are not altogether satisfied with that reduction, but I suggest to them that they should accept it if it is only with the hope of getting the qualification wiped out altogether. I think Ministers may be congratulated upon their self-sacrifice in suggesting a reduction in their salaries by £200, but I am not in sympathy personally with that reduction. I believe that if Cabinet Ministers are going to devote the whole of their time and energies to their departments they should be well worth £1,000 a year; but we may take it that the very mention of the proposal is an earnest of their desire to economise. If that is so, then I suggest that we might do as is done in some of the other States, abolish payment of members of the Upper House. It would give a few thousand pounds to spend in another direction. When we were talking about Federation we were all led to believe that economy would be the order of the day, that one Governor would be sufficient for the whole of the States, and that there would be a decrease in the number of members of Parliament. Yet none of these reforms have been carried out so far as this State is concerned; and in that respect I shall be in favour, at the termination of His Excel-

lency's term of office, of the Government making provision to abolish the office altogether. There is one omission, and to my mind rather a serious omission, from the Speech, and that is a Local Option Bill. Many of us were under the impression last year that when the House met again the Government would move in this direction. There has been a change of Government since, but the people in the State, I think, are anxious to have the privilege of veto in their own particular neighbourhoods. For some time past public-house licenses have been granted all over the State, the people having no practical control over licenses; hence they are anxious that a Local Option Bill should be introduced. I hope the Premier will not be too long before he moves in this direction. There is one matter to which I wish to refer outside the Speech, and that is a clause in the last report of the Inspector of Fisheries where he says that during the previous year he had reported the discovery of commerce sponges in our coastal waters; and he speaks of some thousands of miles of water where these sponges may be collected. I suggest to the Minister controlling this department that, seeing we are to have an exhibition in the State at the latter end of this year, instructions should be given for a quantity of the sponges to be collected, sufficient to make a good show at this exhibition, in order to show that we have a large industry lying untouched at our doors. I believe the Government in all departments recognise the importance of encouraging industries. Here is an industry that lies at our doors and has not been touched. I hope the Minister will see his way clear to assist in the development of this industry. In conclusion, I wish to say that personally I have every confidence in the future of this State and am just as anxious for its prosperity as other members. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion now before the House.

MR. F. J. WARE (Hannans): It is not my intention to take up the time of this House at any great length on the Address-in-Reply, but at the outset I wish to enter a protest against the action of the Government in not placing before members of the House the measures they

intend to bring down this session. I consider that it was due to members that they should receive some information as to the measures it was intended to bring down this session. Certainly we have certain measures set out in the Governor's Speech, but then we have it mentioned that Bills will be laid before us during the present session dealing with a number of subjects requiring attention. This is certainly vague, and I think it is due to members that they should have something placed before them so that they could know what the intentions of the Government are during this session. In the forefront of the Speech also, we are told that the prosperity of the State is proceeding apace, or words to that effect. I consider that this is practically an insult to thousands of people in the State at the present time. While we have thousands of people unemployed in this State, the Government issue this to them, "That the prosperity of the State continues apace;" and practically tell these people that they are loafers and do not want employment. I think it would be better on the part of the Government if they would face the real facts of the situation, with a firm determination to try to see what they can possibly do to make the affairs of the State better than they are. Certainly the State has a great future before it with proper government, but that is not to say that the State at present is in a prosperous condition. I have here a cablegram sent by the Premier to the old country on the occasion of the eighth annual West Australian dinner, and it reads as follows:—

Perth, W.A., May 28, 1906.—West Australia extends hearty greeting across the sea to all West Australian residents and friends in England present at the annual reunion to-morrow night, and to the committee's distinguished guests. I appreciate and desire express warm thanks for the honour done to State in attendance of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on behalf of Government. Prospects of State are from all points of view brighter and more encouraging than ever. Liberal land settlement scheme attracting continual stream population, and new agricultural railways being constructed. The mining industry steadily strengthens and extends. Gold mines have since 1890 distributed £14,542,456 in dividends, and produced £65,739,016 of gold. The timber and other industries are rapidly extending. Government doing all possible to liberalise State laws and institutions—etc.

The Attorney General has a better

knowledge, or a knowledge that he is prepared to place before the people of the State, with regard to mining. He told the electors at Kalgoorlie that mines were closing down every day and that no new mines were being opened up to take their places. I think the hon. member should be commended for placing the true situation before the people of the State. I think it is the duty of the Government, instead of talking about something which does not exist, to face the full facts and do what they possibly can to employ the people of the State. As evidence of the prosperity of the State, we are told in the Governor's Speech that during last year the State paid dividends to the extent of over two million pounds. I regret to say that it is not evidence that the State in itself is prosperous. These dividends as we know have been brought about by up-to-date machinery and a contract system—well, an alleged contract system. We know that the major portion of the money leaves the State. If the Government could have shown that so many mines had been opened and so many more thousands of men had been employed in mining, that would have shown in itself that the State was prosperous; but the fact that the dividends go out of the State I do not think is any evidence of it. We are also told in the Governor's Speech that it is the intention of the Government to bring down a Loan Bill. In this instance we are not informed to what extent the Government intend to borrow, neither have we any assurance that they intend to expend the money on reproductive works alone. I hope that when the Bill comes down we shall have some assurance that the money is to be spent purely on reproductive works, and that we shall also have some information as to the works on which this money is to be spent. The matter of land settlement will certainly receive the support of members sitting on the Opposition side of the House. Although the majority of members on the Opposition side of the House represent the goldfields of this State, still we are not blind to the necessity of pushing forward the agricultural and pastoral industries to their fullest extent. In dealing with the land question I wish to say something about the residential

blocks on the goldfields. I understand it is the intention of the Government to alter the system prevailing on the goldfields at the present time and to give people on the goldfields an opportunity to secure the freehold title to their blocks in five years. I am sorry that I cannot support the Government in this proposal. While I will admit the system at present in existence on the goldfields is unsatisfactory, in my opinion it has been made unsatisfactory by those who are opposed to the leasehold system. While the system in existence at the present time is unpopular, I can point out in a few words why it is unpopular—it is because of the enormous rents which have been charged people on the fields for the blocks. People on the goldfields are very much over-rated. They have to pay from £2 10s. up to £4 per annum for the right to one of these blocks. I consider that where the people are rated so high, and considering the rate they have to pay for their water from the water scheme, and the high cost of living, these people are unduly taxed. In these circumstances it is no wonder there is dissatisfaction with the present system. It was never intended when this new system came into operation that these high rates should be charged on these blocks. I have a letter in my pocket now from one of my constituents in which he states that he is charged as high as £10 per annum by the Government for the rent of a block on which he has a small store in a back street. And he has to pay this enormous sum of £10 per annum simply because he supplies the neighbours with little necessaries which they may happen to run out of. I hope that if the new system does come into operation—and I suppose the Government with their big majority will be able to carry their proposal—that some consideration will be shown to the people on the fields in the direction of making provision so that blocks will not be dummed as in the past. Those who know the fields are aware that in the early days fortunes were made in the buying and selling of blocks of land. People bought blocks and sold them, just as they bought and sold scrip, creating a lamentable state of affairs. Precautions will have to be taken so that a person who has held a

block previously will have to appear before the land board in all subsequent applications, and if it be found that he has been selling as a speculation he should be denied the right to take up a farther block. I have had considerable experience in this matter. I was associated with the Attorney General (Hon. N. Keenan) on the land board at Kalgoorlie, when we had quite a number of people before us applying for blocks. We may have had only half-a-dozen blocks at our disposal to recommend to different people, but I have seen the court crowded with applicants for those blocks. That is another matter which I desire to bring under the notice of the Minister responsible for the control of this department, namely that more of these blocks should be thrown open on the fields. We find that while people are desirous of getting off the leases and taking up blocks as early as possible, there are not sufficient blocks thrown open to enable them to do so. We want more blocks thrown open, and what is more, we want more liberal conditions in connection with them. It has been claimed by the Kalgoorlie Roads Board—I am speaking now more particularly of Kalgoorlie and Boulder—and I agree with them, that the chairman of the roads board is the proper gentleman to occupy the bench on the land board. At the present time we have the mayor of Kalgoorlie and the president of the Trades and Labour Council sitting as a land board. Considering that the majority of these blocks—in fact the whole of those which have been thrown open—are in the roads board area, I think that the chairman of the roads board, and not the mayor of Kalgoorlie should have a seat on the board. We were told by the Premier, in reply to an interjection from his own side, that present holders would not be compelled to come under the new regulations. These holders, knowing the conditions prevailing on the goldfields at the present time, if the conditions are liberalised at all will be only too glad to come under them. With regard to the tax on unimproved land values, I regret that the Government have not shown more sincerity with regard to this matter. We find that while in this House they advocate a tax on unimproved land values they have done their utmost outside to

assist the return of certain gentlemen to another Chamber whom they know to be totally opposed to this proposal. We find also, even in this House, that members sitting on that (Government) side of the House are not agreed among themselves about the proposal. We have the member for Perth (Mr. H. Brown) and the member for North Perth (Mr. Brebber), and there are other instances of members sitting on the other side, who are opposed to the proposal. It is rather amusing to find that the member for Perth, representing the city, which has always been spoon-fed and which has had so much of the money of this State for the purpose of building snake-houses and so forth, now that some effort is to be made by the Government for the purpose of raising revenue, is here the first to cry out. I hope the Premier will be firm in this matter, and pass the Bill through this House. With regard to exemptions, I regret that in the opinion of members on the Government side it is necessary to have exemptions. Even in this matter there is disagreement on the other side. I notice that the member for Albany (Mr. Barnett) and others are opposed to exemptions. I believe it is the intention of the Government to endeavour to pass this Bill with exemptions, thinking that hon. members will vote for the measure. While we (the Opposition) are in favour of taxing unimproved land values, we are not in favour of exemptions; and if the exemptions are included it is just possible that members on the Opposition side of the House will have to vote against the Bill. The totalisator tax is another measure to which I wish to refer. This measure, members will remember, was passed last session, and whilst I was in favour of a tax on the totalisator, I regret that it has been found by experience that a good deal of harm has been done to the charitable institutions, on the goldfields particularly, by this tax. While the revenue of the State has not received much benefit from the tax we find that the charitable institutions, on the goldfields in particular, have been robbed of considerable support. I consider it would have been better had the money collected from the tax been spent in the localities where it was collected. I have no fault to find with regard to the goldfield water

supply administration. I believe the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) had some complaints to make with reference to the cutting off of water and other matters. Regarding my constituency I have had no complaints in this connection. Cases have come under my notice where water has been cut off; but that is only to be expected when people refuse to take notice of the warning given by the water supply administration that their water will be cut off on a certain date. I am utterly opposed to the pooling of the rates; I consider that instead of pooling the rates of these people, we should reduce the price of the water all round. People living in the main streets of Kalgoorlie and Boulder and other places should receive no concession not granted to other people. They are rated according to the value of their properties; so are the people outside those streets, and I consider they should be prepared to pay according to the value of their properties. With regard to the price charged for water to the racecourses on the fields, I regret that the Minister has not seen his way clear to make a reduction in this direction. The racecourses on the fields are practically public reserves, and should receive water at the same rate as is charged to reserves on the goldfields. We find that the mayor of Kalgoorlie held his reception on the Kalgoorlie racecourse recently. The Salvation Army and the various Sunday-schools hold their picnics on the racecourse, and the Eight Hours' Committee and other bodies make use of the courses for their demonstrations; and the courses are really open to the whole of the public. This being so, I regret that the Minister could not see his way clear to bring the price of the water supplied to the racecourses down to that charged for the public reserves. I am pleased that a Mines Regulation Bill is to come down this session. The member for Ivanhoe (Mr. Scaddan) dealt exhaustively with this matter, and it will be watched with interest by members on this side of the House. The Minister will have an opportunity in this connection of showing whether the reputation that has been given him all over the State is justified or not. We have had the praises of the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory) sung by different people at different functions; but, for

my part, the Minister for Mines has yet to prove himself the possessor of administrative ability. The Government are talking of economy—"economy is necessary in all departments." I think I can point out one direction in which economy may be effected, if the Government so desire, and that is in connection with our charitable institutions. I am speaking now particularly of our hospitals. The hospitals on the goldfields are under the control of the Government; they are supported by the Government, and rules and regulations are drawn up by the Government. The Kalgoorlie hospital, I understand, is controlled by two resident doctors, with one or two other medical gentlemen on the honorary medical staff. If these hospitals were placed under medical boards, these boards would be able to conduct the hospitals more satisfactorily than they are conducted at the present time, and also at less expense to the State. The charitable institutions in the Eastern States are conducted in this manner, subscribers having the right to vote for the gentlemen who are to act on the board of management; and if this system obtained on the goldfields I feel sure it would prove a success. If a certain amount were charged for membership as a subscriber to the hospital, such subscribers to have the right to cast a vote annually in the matter of the membership of the board to control the hospital, I consider this would be a step in the right direction. It is only right that any doctor on the fields should have the right to enter the hospital and attend to his patients there if necessary. Cases have occurred where men on the fields who have contributed for years to friendly societies have been taken ill and had to go to a hospital. It was impossible for them to pay the exorbitant fees asked by private hospitals, and their only course was to go into the Government institution, where their own doctor could not attend them. Immediately they enter that hospital they lose the services of their doctor. No matter how much that gentleman may understand their system and the previous ailments they have had, he is denied the right to visit and attend to them; and I consider that the doctors on the fields, outside those already in charge of the hospital, should certainly have the right

to visit there and attend to patients, if they so desire. With regard to the Agricultural Bank, I am pleased with the assurance of the Honorary Minister that this is to be better carried out in the future. A case came under my notice a few weeks ago where a man intended to go on the land. He had limited capital to do so. Just after taking up land a friend of his wrote to him, stating that he had been for some time on the land, and had required assistance from the Agricultural Bank, for which he had applied, but he had not received it; and he strongly advised him not to go on the land. I know that the Honorary Minister has a full knowledge of agriculture, and I hope he will do his utmost to see that the conditions are, as far as possible, liberalised, and that people in need of assistance will receive it from that institution. The next matter I wish to touch upon is in regard to the Factories Act and Early Closing Act. I have before me a report of the Chief Inspector of Factories. I consider this gentleman is to be commended for the report he has placed before the people of this State; but we find that he has been labouring under great difficulties. At the beginning, he started out on this vast State with several Acts under his control, with three inspectors. About six months ago one of these inspectors resigned. No fresh appointment has been made subsequently, and since that time we have had the whole of this State with only two inspectors of factories. This measure was passed through the Parliament of this State, and I consider it was the intention of the Legislature that it should be put into operation. I contend, however, that with only two inspectors of factories it is impossible for this Act to be enforced, and I hope that in the near future some action will be taken so as to increase the number of inspectors in order that these various Acts may be enforced. The report contains the following:—

As previously stated, the earlier part of the period under review was occupied by me in preparing the necessary regulations. Before the completion of these, it was found necessary to amend the Act in respect to Section 27, Subsection 6, dealing with cubic air space. This, as originally provided, was limited to 154 cubic feet per head. A little thought clearly showed how very deficient this amount was, and the Act was amended to prescribe a

minimum of 350 cubic feet. The English standard is 400 cubic feet, which is also the standard in all the States of the Commonwealth, with the exception of South Australia. I regret that it has been thought desirable to cut down the number of cubic feet allowed per head to 350. It has not been done in this State, but we are told that 400 feet are allowed in other States, and, if such be the case, I certainly think the same amount should be allowed in this State.

MR. SCADDAN : Especially on the goldfields.

MR. WARE : Yes; especially on the goldfields, where we have iron dwellings, unlined very often, to work in. Another portion of the report to which I wish to draw attention reads :—

A difficulty was encountered just at the outset of the work in the resentment of factory occupiers at the dual inspection of factories and local board inspectors. The Act provides that where any defect can be better remedied under any Act relating to public health, other than the Factories Act, the factories inspector is to report the same to the local authority, whose duty it shall be to remedy the defect within a reasonable time. For the purpose of this section, the factories inspector may, if he think fit, take a local board inspector into the factory with him. Out of respect for the local authorities which have had control of the sanitation of factories prior to the existence of the Factories Act, I have endeavoured to work through and in conjunction with local boards of health in effecting necessary improvements in matters more directly controlled by the Health Act. To this end I circularised all local boards affected by the Factories Act in the metropolitan area at the commencement of December, 1904, inviting their co-operation, so that occupiers of factories should not be harassed by dual inspection and those differences of opinion that usually follow. Matters in this connection worked smoothly for some time, and I received assurance of support; but when it has taken the local authority six weeks to remedy a common nuisance, nine months to make a start in removing a seriously insanitary condition of affairs, and when five months have been allowed to elapse after service of an order to cleanse certain premises without any visible result being achieved, I think reasonable time has been exceeded, and I feel that it is about time an alteration was made. Of late it has been only by constant reference to the matter in hand, either by personal representation or by frequent letters to the local boards, that they have been induced to make a move of any kind. I have found occupiers of factories willing in most cases to do what is required when they have been shown by practical illustration that an alteration is needed. It has happened that the matter to be remedied

has been previously approved by the local board.

I have read this to show that the system in existence at the present time is iniquitous. We find that we have a Chief Inspector of Factories in this State with inspectors under him. They go to a factory and find that factory in an insanitary condition, but they have no power in themselves to order that the factory shall be put into a sanitary state. It is necessary for them to appeal to some local board, and it rests with this board whether the matter is remedied or not. I consider that if we have factory inspectors in this State, they should certainly have the right and power to have control of factories right through. In regard to dual inspection also, we have that in connection with machinery. We find that, if an inspector goes into a factory where machinery is employed he has no control whatever over that machinery. As regards safeguarding employees in the factory, this comes under another department altogether, and another inspector is required to remedy any defect in this direction. I consider that one inspection is quite sufficient in any shop or factory, and that full control should be placed in this department, so that the inspector of factories can attend to the whole of the matters in connection with factory work. We also have a recommendation here from the Chief Inspector that, in regard to all premises built for the purpose of factories, the plans should be submitted to him for approval. This is a valuable suggestion, and should be adopted by the Government when this Act comes up for amendment, as I have no doubt it will, seeing that so many alterations have been suggested by the Chief Inspector of Factories. We are told here in connection with bakehouses that fully 90 per cent. of them are not registered. A person carrying on his business and employing a number of hands is compelled to register under the Act, whereas another man round the corner, for instance, we will say only employing a couple of hands, is not compelled to do so. We have 90 per cent. of the bakehouses and also of the laundries in this State not registered. I think this is a matter which should be remedied as soon as possible. The health of the community should be our first care, and it is

necessary that the people of this State should have some protection, and know that what is placed on the table is certainly healthy, and has not been produced in some backyard surrounded by unhealthy conditions. With regard to the lunch rooms in factories and workshops, I hope that in the near future some steps will be taken so that employees may have some provision made for them whereby they may leave the room or factory and go into another compartment for lunch. At the present time, very often employees sit down in the very place where they are working, and eat their lunch in the midst of fluff and dirt. Seeing that they are in those surroundings for at least eight or nine hours a day, another room, a healthy room, should be provided, so that they could at least go there during lunch hour and enjoy their lunch. Dealing with outdoor work, I fail to understand how the Chief Inspector has come to his decision that outdoor workers receive the same wages as those indoors. My experience has been that those working out of doors do not receive the same wages, and I hope that, if an amending Bill is brought down, all outdoor work will be stopped. Outdoor work is the first step in the direction of sweating. This has been my experience. I have proved it as such, and I hope that whilst the State is young, and before our people are ground down under the yoke of the sweater, some action will be taken to prevent outdoor work. If we prevent outdoor work, we shall put a big spoke in the wheel of the sweater, and I hope this will be done. With regard to the stamping of furniture, we have it from the inspector that this is being evaded—that is, the furniture manufactured by Asiatics—and I trust that more rigid regulations will be inserted in the new Bill. Of course I am saying the new Bill, because I consider that, on the Chief Inspector's report, it will be the duty of this Government to bring down an amending measure. Certainly it is not included in the Governor's Speech, but I hope that it will be amongst some of those measures brought down during the session. The matter of apprenticeship is also dealt with in this report. The Chief Inspector strongly recommends the indenturing of apprentices, and I hope that

a measure will be passed in this State concerning apprentices. This matter is very often brought up in the Arbitration Court. It was mentioned in the case the Court dealt with only recently, and I trust that in the near future we shall have some Act dealing with the subject. We are told by the Chief Inspector that many apprentices start work, and after they have worked one or two years they consider they are full-blown tradesmen, and go in and compete with tradesmen who have served many years in their trade. This is doing a lot of injustice to the several industries in this State, inasmuch as many of our workmen, owing to there not being a proper system of apprenticeship, are not as competent as they should be. It is not my intention to take up the time of the House at any greater length. There are many matters I could deal with that have been touched on, but it is not my intention to go over the ground that has been traversed by other members. This is my maiden speech in the House, and I have refrained from touching on many matters which, if I did so, might be considered personal. This being my first speech, I have eliminated them. But I wish to state that I have not failed to notice certain events which took place during the last recess. However, these matters have been already referred to during this debate; and it is not my intention to speak of them.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanowna): I presume that although you, sir, have been so often congratulated during the course of this debate, it is not yet too late for me also to join with those who have expressed their joy at seeing you back from your trip to the motherland. I shall not at the commencement of my speech deal with these great shortcomings which in my opinion have been so scandalously exhibited by members of the present Government. I wish first to get rid of a few preliminary details and to some extent minor matters—minor so far as principle is concerned, but still important. First of all, notwithstanding that some members take a sort of pride in not airing the grievances of their own constituencies, I am bound to deal with a few matters concerning mine. And I have to complain that several events are happening in connection with my constituency,